

Israelis kill Lebanese soldier

BEIRUT (AP) — An Israeli patrol shot and killed a Lebanese army soldier who apparently was "mistaken" for a guerrilla when spotted in Israel's self-proclaimed "security zone" during the night, security sources in both countries reported Friday. The police station in Hasbaya, a town on the northeastern edge of the "security zone," reported the shooting to the police headquarters in Beirut by radio. The message said: "An Israeli patrol near Hasbaya opened fire at a moving object last night. They found out after the shooting that they had killed a Lebanese army soldier in uniform." A statement issued by the Israeli army said the patrol operating near Hasbaya "identified a suspicious figure in an area where terrorists operate and opened fire." It added that searchers Friday morning "discovered a body which was identified as a Lebanese soldier." Hasbaya is 11.6 kilometres north of the Israeli border. The Lebanese police would not disclose the identity of the soldier, or speculate on what he was doing in the buffer zone where the Lebanese army has no presence.

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Council approves U.N. Cambodia force

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N. Security Council on Friday authorised sending a 22,000-member peacekeeping force — the biggest in U.N. history — to oversee an end to Cambodia's civil war and rebuild the South-East Asian nation. Full deployment was contingent on General Assembly approval of a \$1.9 billion budget for the operation, but about \$200 million in emergency funds are available now. The 15-member council unanimously adopted a resolution calling on the secretary-general to begin dispatching the 15,000-person military contingent as soon as possible, but no exact date was set for the deployment to begin. "This long-awaited step constitutes a landmark in the long effort over many years to secure a comprehensive political settlement of the Cambodian conflict," said Security Council President Thomas R. Pickering, the U.S. ambassador. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali called the mission "a major political imperative, a noble enterprise."

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Turkish party office bombed

ISTANBUL (AP) — A bomb exploded Friday at an office of the Social Democratic Populist Party, causing widespread damage but no casualties, police reported. The party is a member of the governing coalition. Police said the words "hands over the Kurdish population will be broken" were painted on a wall of the building with the signature of the previously unheard of group "Young Communist Union."

Turkey to release Iran arms ship

NICOSIA (AP) — Ankara has informed Tehran that it has decided to release a Cypriot-registered ship detained four months ago while en route to Iran with a load of weapons on board, the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported. It said Iranian Vice-President Hassan Habibi was notified of the decision during a meeting in Tehran with Turkish Minister of State Mehmet Barlas. IRNA did not say if the Cape Males, which was detained in October, would be allowed to sail on to Iran with the cargo, or return to Bulgaria after its release.

Minor undergoes surgery

BEIRUT (AP) — President Elias Hrawi underwent "minor" surgery Friday for an unspecified ailment and is recuperating well, an official announcement released by the St. Charles Hospital said. It said the "minor operation was successful. The president is in excellent condition." It did not specify his ailment, or indicate how long he will remain in hospital.

Iranian cleric attacks U.S. policy

NICOSIA (AP) — A senior Iranian cleric said Friday that Washington was interested in Central Asia only to suppress Islam, the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported. The cleric quoted Ayatollah Yazdi, head of Iran's judiciary, as saying that Washington's actions in the region contravened the United Nations Charter, which calls for the right to practice religion. Ayatollah Yazdi attacked comments by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker who earlier this month halted several of the newly independent republics. Mr. Baker expressed concern for the spread of Iranian influence among the Muslim republics. Iran has established diplomatic ties with five of the Central Asian republics, and Muslim Azerbaijan in the Caucasus. The Iranian have also signed a number of multibillion-dollar deals with the Central Asian and other republics of the former Soviet Union. Ayatollah Yazdi said: "Baker has admitted that the United States views the republics solely as a means for checking Islamic revival." He said the republics otherwise "have no other worth" for the United States.

Australia offers aid to Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Australian minister for foreign affairs and trade, Senator Gareth Evans, has announced that Australia will provide 100,000 Australian dollars for emergency assistance to Jordan and Lebanon in response to the recent snowstorms. The Jordanian component of AUD 50,000 (approximately USD 35,000) will be provided through CARE Australia to supply food packages to needy families through its partner agencies.

Israel claims guerrilla cell uncovered

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The Shin Bet, Israel's internal security service, uncovered an Arab guerrilla cell suspected of killing a prominent professor and two other people in Jerusalem, police announced Friday. Police said the suspects gained membership to the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) mainstream Fatah group by presenting the identity cards of the farce people they are suspected of slaying.

Jordan hobbles back to normal after heavy blizzard

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan's most severe snowstorm this winter, and arguably in the last 70 years, gave way to sunshine and melting snow Friday with the predicting relatively clear skies and scattered rains for at least the next 10 days. Most of the key roads were reopened by Friday, giving the country the chance to take stock of the weather havoc and recover from the stranglehold on everyday life. Students who enjoyed an extra three-day bonus holiday were expected to go back to school Saturday.

The Meteorological Department dismissed widely circulated reports that another blizzard, the sixth this season, was poised to lash the Kingdom beginning Sunday. "There will be a gradual rise in temperatures and there could be slight rains in the northern regions for the next 10 days at least," said Ali Abanda, head of the department. "All our calculations indicate no snowfall during this period," he affirmed, noting that the latest snowstorm was the heaviest to hit Jordan since 1922 in that the blizzard affected areas as low as 300 metres above sea level — a rare occurrence, given the features of the winds and cold fronts affecting the region in the past.



Cars buried in snow were a common sight in Amman last week.

Civil Defence Department (CDD) officials said no major weather-related incidents involving the loss of life or serious injury were reported in the past 72 hours. However, hundreds of homes collapsed in the Jordan Valley and the Gaza refugee camp in the north. A CDD spokesman said one death reported in the press was a case of drowning and another involved a heart attack.

House collapses were also reported in the Baqaa camp. His Majesty King Hussein drove around many of the snow affected areas in the capital and urged officials to speed up relief work and clear the roads for normal traffic. Dr. Abanda said it was too early to give any accurate account of the volume of snow that fell in the past 72 hours. However, he said, Western Amman and the

city of Salt and surrounding areas were blanketed by over one metre of snow while in some northern and southern regions the level went up to 1.5 metres to two metres. Faced with blocked or slippery roads which made driving impossible, hundreds of drivers were forced to abandon their cars on roadsides and walk home. On Thursday and Friday, many were seen trying to revive the cold



Photo on right shows a reopened road in Amman (Photos by Yousef Al 'Allan)

engines and batteries of their vehicles, some of which were hardly visible from under the snow. In some of the outlying regions, work has still under way Friday to clear some of the secondary roads and restore power supply, cut off after pylons collapsed, officials said. In general, order was restored to regular traffic on main roads, but many secondary roads re-

mained closed by snow. It was too early to assess the national loss in terms of industry and agricultural production, but economists expected the figures to run into millions of dollars. They noted that since early December snowstorms had caused a series of disruptions and the cumulative effect could be very high. "My losses this season are much larger than I suffered dur-

ing the entire Gulf crisis and the war," said the owner of a confectionery outside Amman. No Jordanian newspapers, usually the last to accept the inevitable, did not appear on Wednesday. The three Arabic dailies, Al Rai, Al Dustour and Sawt Al Shaab, went on the stands Thursday with limited-page editions. The Jordan Times did not publish at all since Wednesday.

Talks make little headway as Israel attempts to sidetrack issue of withdrawal

From Lami K. Andoni in Washington

THE FOURTH ROUND of Arab-Israeli peace talks appeared heading for a deadlock as the Israeli delegation defiantly rejected to any commitment to the principle of withdrawal from the Arab territories it occupied in the 1967 war.

The four Arab parties involved, demonstrating a closer level of coordination during this round, refused to proceed on discussions of any other aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict until the Israeli delegation clearly accepted that the objective of the talks was the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.

But the Arab side, it seems, is determined not to pull out of the talks, particularly that Arab delegates believe that Israel is deliberately provoking them to withdraw.

Furthermore, the Arab side is concerned not to undermine American pressure on Israel to stop settlements building in the occupied territories in return for granting Tel Aviv \$10 billion in loan guarantees to absorb Soviet Jewish immigrants — even though many Arab delegates are convinced that a conditional approval of the grant will still not solve the settlement issue.

Initially, the Arab delegations, mainly the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, were hoping that this round might achieve important progress regarding a freeze in settlement building. After four days of talks, it is becoming clear that the conflict over the settlements will take a longer time to be resolved.

The talks are expected to end on Wednesday after the Arabs agreed not to ask for an exten-

sion. It is vague at this stage to decide if the next round will resume soon or until after the Israeli elections, especially that the process still very much hinges on the future of Israel's settlement policies.

Even though the Arabs, most notably Syria, are still pressing that Washington remains the venue, they have agreed to an American suggestion to submit lists of countries where the talks could resume.

On the eve of the fourth round the Arab delegations had agreed to insist on Washington as a venue unless a tangible progress was achieved.

As the first week of the fourth round of talks has indicated, although the parties have finally gotten down to talk substance the negotiations have not progressed.

Judging by the Arab and Israeli statements and briefings, in all the four tracks — with Jordan, the Palestinians, Syria and Lebanon — Israel sought to direct the process in the direction of addressing its "security" concerns and to avoid discussing the status of the occupied territories.

Arab insistence on starting with the U.N. Security Council resolutions — including 568 in the case of Lebanon — has succeeded in getting the Israelis to discuss the resolutions. But these discussions — that were often heated — have only reinforced the wide gap between the Arab and Israeli approaches to the Security Council resolutions and consequently to the terms of reference of the peace process.

That applied to the four tracks from the very outset of the talks last Monday. For example the Israeli delegation initially ruled outright the Jordanian delegation's demand that the negotiations start by an commitment on the principle of land for peace

and a freeze of settlements.

The Israeli argument, according to sources from the Jordanian delegation, has been that Jordan "was not directly concerned with 242 or the settlements."

The Jordanians responded by emphasising that Jordan cannot move on to other aspects of bilateral character unless it was clear the talks are heading towards the implementation of 242.

"We want to lay the foundation for the process to proceed, we cannot start from a vacuum," said Jordanian delegate Munther Haddadin.

The Jordanians also, publicly and during the talks, disputed Israeli arguments about the settlements. "The Israeli settlements directly infringe on Jordan," said Jordanian spokesman Marwan Muasher.

Dr. Muasher explained that Israeli settlements draw on Jordan's water resources and triggers a de facto deportation of Palestinians to Jordan. He stressed that the continuation of settlement building will not only predetermine the outcome of the negotiations but also undermine the quest for a comprehensive peace.

In an apparent attempt to sidetrack the discussion over 242 and proceed on to other issues, the Israelis suggested setting up committees. The Jordanian side initially rejected the idea but later was considering the formation of a joint working committee to discuss the implementation of 242. The Israelis, it seems, were seeking a committee to negotiate the interpretation of 242 — a tactic Jordanian delegates feared could just derail negotiations over substantive issues.

Finally the Jordanian delegation decided to maintain its original position against the formation of committees for concern

that such a set-up will give a semblance of progress when progress was lacking.

At their press briefings, however, Israeli spokesmen continued to imply that there was progress on the Jordanian track without elaborating in concrete terms. Thus a claim was disputed by the Jordanian delegation.

In Amman, Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber officially denied that Jordan had accepted the formation of committees. But the main source of contention during last week's talks has proven to be a ten-page Israeli proposal for interim Palestinian rule in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The 10 proposals offers very limited administrative power to the Palestinians, involves the continuation of Israeli military administration of the occupied territories, does not include Palestinian elections and refuses to give Palestinians any sort of control over security or the territories.

The Palestinians dismissed the proposals as an attempt to maintain and legitimise Israeli occupation. The Israelis, insisted that it was "a serious offer."

The Israelis accused the Palestinians of orchestrating a "misinformation campaign to downgrade and ridicule a serious and generous proposal," — as was described by Israeli spokesman Yossi Gull.

The Israelis and Palestinians clashed over two other major points: Settlements and the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The Palestinians offered a nine-point document that outlined a phased-out plan to freeze settlement building and released a list of Israeli human rights violations since the peace process started last October.

The Israelis dismissed any discussion of settlements and told

the Palestinians that they should have approached the Israeli military governor with complaints about human rights violations — at attitude that an incensed Palestinian delegation found patronising.

Similar clashes took place on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. The Syrians, like the Jordanians, started by asking for an Israeli commitment to 242. The Israelis responded by asking for a commitment to normalisation of relations. According to Syrian spokeswoman Bushra Kanafani, the Syrians maintained the position that since 242 and 338 were the agreed-upon basis for the negotiations the parties' commitment to these terms was essential for any progress.

The Syrians also stressed publicly that the implementation of 242 applied to all territories occupied by Israel, and not just the Golan Heights. "Pragmatically speaking there can be no permanent peace without a comprehensive solution," said Ms. Kanafani.

According to Syrian delegates, most of the time was spent in exchanging acrimonious accusations as Israel insisted that Syria was bent on the destruction of the Jewish state. In the Syrian view, the Israelis deliberately "wasted time on accusations to jump over the issue of Israeli occupation."

Ms. Kanafani, and later on Syrian delegation head Moufak Alal, disclosed that the Israeli delegation brought tapes into the negotiating room containing recording of anti-Israeli broadcasts of Damascus Radio during the 1973 war and later on raised the issue of Syrian Jews.

The Syrians reacted by asking the Israelis to focus on substantive issues and the agreed-upon

Foreign minister lauds U.S. stand on loan guarantees

By Kirk T. Albrecht Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber has welcomed statements by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker that the Bush administration will withhold guarantees requested by Israel if it does not halt settlements in the occupied territories.

Dr. Abu Jaber, in an interview with USA Radio, said he found the interaction between Mr. Baker, who was testifying before a congressional appropriations subcommittee, and Florida Representative Larry Smith fascinating. "I watched with fascination on CNN the exchange with Mr. Smith, which I thought was terribly significant," said Dr. Abu Jaber. Mr. Smith, a Democrat from the southern U.S. state, is one of the House of Representatives' staunchest supporters of Israel. He told Mr. Baker that he found the administration's stance "extremely offensive."

But Dr. Abu Jaber said he thought the conversation in the subcommittee was more indicative of internal U.S. differences, than its foreign policy as a whole. "I thought it dealt with the relationship between the administration and Congress more than the affairs in the Middle East," he said.

There has been feverish lobbying in Capitol Hill for approval of the loan guarantees, which Israel says it needs to absorb up

to one million Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Public sentiments in the U.S. has been tilting away from granting the loan guarantee, as the country is in the midst of a budget-tightening recession. Many citizens and lawmakers say this is not a time to pour money overseas when things at home are in need of strong measures.

Israeli Deputy Minister Benyamin Netanyahu told reporters on Wednesday that his government views the loan guarantees as a humanitarian issue intended, as he put it, at saving Jews from persecution in Russia and other republics of the former USSR. He said the U.S. should not "link humanitarian issues with political issues," referring to settlement activity, and the Israeli elections, which are scheduled for June.

Arab parties to the current Middle East peace talks have continually affirmed that granting of the loan guarantees may put an end to the talks, now in their fourth bilateral round. Palestinian leaders went to this round of negotiations saying the issue of loan guarantees and settlements was the hinge on which the future of the talks hung.

Dr. Abu Jaber said that this new boldness from Washington gives hope to the talks. "As far as Jordan is concerned," said Dr. Abu Jaber, "it does offer a glimmer of hope that the administration is going to stand its ground

(Continued on page 5)

Algerian official denies opposition arrest charges

MADRID (AP) — A member of the state committee that governs Algeria denied Friday that 30,000 people have been arrested since it assumed power Jan. 16 and cancelled elections that seemed likely to sweep Islamic fundamentalists into office.

Ali Haroun, one of several Algerian officials who have fanned out across Europe and North America to tell their version of events, said 4,900 people have been detained, one-sixth the number given by the opposition Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). "I think it's very easy to exaggerate," Mr. Haroun said, adding that 50 people had died in clashes, half of them members of security forces.

The five-man committee took power after the army forced President Chadli Benjedid to resign. The manoeuvres were aimed at keeping FIS, which had won the first round of parliamentary elections, from further electoral victories.

Authorities are now in the process of banning FIS, and its leaders have been arrested. Mr. Haroun, arriving from Brussels, was scheduled to meet

with Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez and Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez Ordóñez later Friday.

The Algerian interior minister has visited Morocco, and other officials are to go to the United States, Canada, Germany and elsewhere.

Mr. Haroun said the committee's tenure will not be "indefinite" and that the electoral process will begin anew within 23 months.

He also said the country needs a new centre-left party because "the majority of the Algerian people are very disoriented" politically.

Pressed to explain the committee's claims to be "democratic," Mr. Haroun said the takeover prevented the rise of a party that was an outspoken opponent of Western-style democracy.

"The problem posed is... does one have the right to allow a democratic process to proceed if the avowed objective of the democratic process is to kill democracy," Mr. Haroun said. He drew an analogy to the Nazi victory in German elections in

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Arabs fear fresh land seizures by Israel because of immigration

AIN MAHEL (AP) — Amin Hawaiteh, 78, would walk kilometres to road-building jobs, saving every penny to buy land. He assembled 8 hectares over the years, planted olive trees and dreamed of passing it to his grandchildren.

The dream ended when the government confiscated Mr. Hawaiteh's land and that of his neighbours in this Arab village. Thousands of apartments are being built on it for Jewish immigrants, most of them from the Soviet Union.

Arab legislators and village leaders say this amounts to preferential treatment for Jewish newcomers over Israel's Arab citizens.

In the Arab village of Ramya, residents have appealed an eviction order to the supreme court. Israeli Arabs suspect the order is the beginning of a new land seizure, but housing ministry officials say the fears are unfounded.

"No more land will be confiscated from the Arabs," said Eli Babai, deputy director of the ministry's land authority. "We have enough land for the immigrants."

He said 70,000 apartments would be built in the next two years on "land that belongs to Jews or the government."

Arabs are sceptical, noting that the government placed 7,284 hectares of Arab land in Galilee under the control of a Jewish regional council and refuses to recognise 120 small Arab villages, insisting the villagers move elsewhere.

"The aim of this government is to evict the Arabs from their land," legislator Hassem Mahamed told parliament.

Mr. Babai said the villages Israel wants to remove are too small to maintain. "People can't just build where they want to," he declared.

He said the villagers had been offered land elsewhere and money to build houses. Such compensation usually is turned down by Arabs, who feel taking it would constitute accepting the loss of their land.

The government takes land for what it decided are "public needs." Owners are offered compensation ranging from 10 per cent to full market value, depending on the type of land and its location.

Since 1948, Israel has confiscated 70,820 of the 126,263 hectares that were under Arab control, said Fadi Naamna, head of the Committee for the Defence of

Arab Land. That includes villages whose residents fled or were driven out during the 1948 war and were not allowed to return.

The current land dispute stems from the last large seizure. The Israelis took 2,023 hectares (5,000 acres) in the Galilee on March 30, 1976, and six Arabs were killed in clashes with police.

About 1,214 hectares of the land taken, about half of it from Arabs, was near the Jewish settlements of Carmiel and Upper Nazareth. Arabs were allowed to continue using the land, but that changed when Soviet immigrants began arriving in huge numbers years ago.

Yitzhak Rabin, then prime minister, promised the regional development plan would benefit both Arabs and Jews.

Mr. Naamna says now that Arab citizens no longer believe government promises.

"We see that, on the land they took (in 1976), they are now building for the Jewish immigrants," he said. "They say it's for all the people, but you can see it's only for the Jews. They are taking from the Arabs to give to the Jews."

In February, Israeli Arab leaders accused the government of leaving them out of the Galilee development plan and called it a "death sentence for our villages."

Evacuation orders were issued to 120 Arab landowners in villages around Upper Nazareth, said Ghanem Habiballah, a teacher from 'Aio Mahel.

Among those told to leave was Mr. Hawaiteh, who bought his land in the 1950s.

"I used to work to work so I could buy my own land, be my own master," he said, flicking amber prayer beads with his calloused right hand. "If I don't have land, I don't have an existence here."

Confiscation has shrunk 'Aio Mahel's land from 1,416 hectares to 415 hectares since 1948, but the population has grown tenfold to 7,000, Mr. Habiballah said.

On the next hilltop, the Jewish settlement of Upper Nazareth, founded in 1956, has increased in size from 1,821 hectares to 2,529 hectares and its population has grown in two years from 26,000 to 35,000. Most of the newcomers are Soviet immigrants.

Niva Poran, spokeswoman for Upper Nazareth, said the land seizures were justified and Israel has the right "to set its own policy," including finding a solution for immigrants from around the world.

Poll shows most Israelis oppose settlement freeze

TEL AVIV (AP) — The majority of Israelis oppose freezing settlement building in the occupied territories as a condition for receiving U.S.-backed loans to absorb immigrants, according to a poll published Friday.

The poll, conducted by the Tel Aviv-based Dahaf Institute, found that 56 per cent of Israelis surveyed were against halting the building of homes for Israelis in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in return for receiving the funds.

Forty-two per cent of the 505 Israelis questioned by telephone said Israel should agree to halt settlements, said the Hebrew daily Yedioth Ahronoth, which published the survey. Two per cent had no opinion, and no margin of error was given.

Israel is requesting \$10 billion in U.S. loan guarantees over five years to help build homes and create jobs for more than 350,000 Jews from the former Soviet Union who have immigrated to Israel since mid-1989.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker said last Monday that the full amount could only be granted in exchange for a settlement freeze.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has rejected any freeze on building. About 115,000 Israelis now live among the two million Palestinians in the occupied territories, and Israel has started 22,000-23,000 housing units on occupied land since 1990.

The U.S. ambassador to Israel, William Harrop, in an interview published Friday, said he expected the United States to stick to its conditions.

"I do not believe that there is much likelihood of the United States' government changing its view, that our system should not be used even indirectly to support settlements in the (occupied) territories," Mr. Harrop told Yedioth.

Mr. Harrop told the daily he was concerned that Israel was spending its funds "on settlements in the (occupied) territories rather than on the absorption of the immigrants." He added the United States still would give the guarantees under proper conditions.

Meanwhile, another drop in the number of Jews arriving from former Soviet republics was blamed on the deteriorating economy in Israel, where unemployment is about 11 per cent and more than double that among immigrants.

The quasi-government Jewish Agency, which brings immigrants to Israel, estimated Friday that about 4,500 Soviet Jews arrived in February, the lowest level in two years. It was a 35 per cent drop from January's already low 6,200 arrivals.

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U.S. trying to trace Iraq's 'hidden billions'

KUWAIT (R) — The United States has launched a worldwide drive to track down billions of dollars in hidden assets helping the government of Saddam Hussein to stay in power, a key official enforcing sanctions against Iraq on behalf of the U.S. says.

Richard Newcomb, director of the office of Foreign Assets Control (FAC) at the U.S. Treasury, said in a speech obtained by Reuters that the funds paid for vital supplies and helped Iraq beat U.N. sanctions.

"In... efforts that span the globe, FAC's international programmes division is in pursuit of Saddam Hussein's hidden instruments of treachery and power, developed secretly to purchase goods..." Mr. Newcomb said in the speech.

"All of us are aware of reports that Saddam Hussein may have at his disposal... \$10 to \$20 billion in hidden assets. Whatever the correct amount may be, whether it be more or less we need to find that concealed wealth," he said.

"He is sustaining himself and feeding those closest to him whom he wants to feed," added Mr. Newcomb.

Iraqi agents, operating through a web of clandestine networks, were using the funds on behalf of the government.

"It is my belief that through secret accounts and investments, covert Iraqi front companies and clandestine agents of his regime, Saddam Hussein is attempting to sustain and proliferate his tools for disregarding the U.N. embargo," he said.

"We can have no higher mission than to seek out, disrupt and ultimately extinguish these networks," he added.

Mr. Newcomb said Kuwaiti businessmen — who had close links with Iraq before its invasion of the emirate — could prove vital in unmasking agents who dealt with Iraq in the past.

The FAC campaign centres on efforts to fish out secret accounts of individuals helping Iraq in defiance of the U.N. embargo imposed after its invasion of Kuwait on Aug. 2, 1990.

The United States is in contact with countries bordering Iraq to choke off the flow of supplies to Baghdad. Mr. Newcomb said this may prove difficult given the length of the frontiers.

The U.S. treasury was authorised to seize the assets of individuals buying goods from Iraq.

The U.N. embargo targeted Iraqi government accounts but not those held by Iraqi leaders or individuals.

Washington saw no distinction between the accounts of Iraqi leaders and those of the government, Mr. Newcomb added.

"This greatly enhances the effectiveness of the sanctions by forestalling a potential avenue of sanctions evasion by specially designated nationals — agents and front companies of Iraq."

His office had identified 48 businesses and 44 individuals in 30 countries as Iraqi agents as well as 160 merchant ships as Iraqi-owned or controlled.

Saudis rumble for change

RIYADH (AP) — For most Saudis, last year's Gulf war was a distant rumble that few experienced.

Now, many are comparing it to an earthquake that left the surface of this closed society intact, yet caused shock waves that still ripple across the kingdom.

Long-placed Saudis are willing to question the established order as never before. Battle lines between religious groups and a more outward-looking technocrat class have sharpened dramatically.

A year after hundreds of thousands of non-Muslim troops were stationed in this kingdom, religious police of hardline Islamic believers patrol the streets to make sure Muslim laws are respected.

Another group of younger, highly educated clerics criticise corruption, say negotiating with Israel, and banks that pay interest, which is forbidden by the Koran.

Saudis seeking a more liberal country, centred among government technocrats and widely travelled businessmen, have no organised outlet.

Many hope the consultative council (Majlis Al Shura), promised by King Fahd will bring with it more liberalisation such as freedom of speech.

"Saudi Arabia changed tremendously after the war," said Dr. Ahmad Al Taweiri, dean of education at King Saud University.

"At the government level, we've realised that we need to make changes in the political, economic and military structure. At the community level, society has become more outspoken. More concerned about the future of the country and more insistent on calls for change and reform," he said.

Many attribute the shift to wartime press coverage. Everything that had been taboo — such as Saudi traditions or the military — was discussed freely for the first time.

Many people liked it, but the Islamic zealots did not.

Some religious extremists criticised the government for suspending some aspects of Islamic law, such as public executions,

during the war.

Today, the executions have resumed. The U.S. State Department listed 26 beheadings in a year.

King Fahd says he is trying to resolve the issues amicably, with wisdom and patience, and if he does not work he says "there will be another war."

Many Saudis and diplomats in his embrace of Algeria, which cracked down on Islamic fundamentalists, as a warning.

Some in the government: a optimistic, seeing the postwar wrangling as a healthy sign that Saudi Arabia is emerging as a socially modern state after a brisk transformation from desert backwater to oil-rich financial giant.

"It's like a car going at high speed suddenly hitting a pothole," said Prince Mohammed bin Faisal, head of the Islamic Affairs office at the Saudi embassy in Washington. "All the passengers are going to start saying, 'See, we warned you about this. Now watch out for the next one. It's natural.'"

The team will meet interim President Ali Mahdi Mohammed and his arch rival, General Mohammed Farrah Aided, according to Salim A. Salim, secretary general of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

Representatives of the two warring sides agreed to a ceasefire on Feb. 14 at talks organised in New York by U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali. But despite the agreement, heavy fighting occurred in the capital of Mogadishu during the talks and sporadic shelling since then.

James Jonah, a U.N. undersecretary, will head the team, which consists of representatives of the OAU, the United Nations, the Arab League and the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), all of whom have previously tried to end the conflict.

Forces loyal to Gen. Aided and Mr. Ali Mahdi have devastated Mogadishu in a vicious battle for control that erupted Nov. 17. Hundreds of thousands of people have fled the city and are camped in the surrounding scrubland and on the beach without adequate food or water.

In addition, indiscriminate bombardment and robberies by armed groups have hampered distribution of the meager relief supplies reaching the divided city.

The United Nations plans a \$12.5 million humanitarian package for Mogadishu but first want a binding ceasefire in this Horn of Africa nation of eight million.

Gen. Aided and Ali Mahdi represent rival factions of the Hawiye clan from which the United Somali Congress draws support.

The congress ousted former President Mohammad Siad Barre from Mogadishu a year ago but failed to exert control over Mogadishu and the rest of the country which has disintegrated into fiefdoms of warring clans.

Northern Somalia, unhappily with the fighting in the rest of the country, seceded in May and calls itself the Somaliland republic.

Somali delegates scuffled and punched each other at an O.C. conference on Tuesday, highlighting the bitter divisions which have torn their country apart

Other flights (Terminal 2)

06:30 Paris, Damascus (AF)
08:15 Beirut (ME)
13:00 Sanaa (Y)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg

Apple (red) 700/8
Apple (yellow) 500/3
Banana 500/4
Banana (Mukambur) 550/4
Beans 700/4
Carrot 200/1
Cauliflower 300/2
Cucumbers (large) 500/5
Cucumbers (small) 500/5
Eggplant 250/2
Garlic 650/5
Grapefruit 180/1
Lemon 300/2
Marrow (large) 500/4
Marrow (small) 200/1
Onion (dry) 200/1
Onion (green) 400/1
Orange 400/1
Pepper (hot) 1000/1
Pepper (sweet) 400/1
Potato 300/1
Radish 100/1
Sage 600/1
Spinach 200/1
Tomato 200/1

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

12:00 Sanaa (Y)
19:10 Rome, Beirut (AZ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:15 Beirut (RJ)
07:00 Agaba (RJ)
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13:00 Geneva, Paris (RJ)
21:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
21:00 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:00 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)

Environment questions linger in Gulf

AHMADI (AP) — The blackened sand is springing back to life.

Under clear blue skies, the desert around this oil town still resembles something Hollywood might dream up to represent a horrific industrial meltdown.

Here sits a crumpled oil storage tank, where kilometre after kilometre of pipeline distiled like spaghetti. And the once white sands stretch black to the horizon, dotted occasionally with shimmering, acid oil lakes.

A new report by the environmental group Greenpeace released Friday says it will take years to understand the impact of the metal- and sulphur-laden smoke that poured into the air for seven months, as well as up to six million barrels of oil that spilled into the Gulf.

But in the wake of unusually heavy rains, the sand now bears a green fuzz as tufts of sturdy desert grass push up through the oil residue.

"Mother nature gives any ecological system the ability to restore itself, so you cannot say the desert is dead," said Dr. Ali N.

Khuraibet of the private Kuwaiti Environmental Action team.

After their invasion of the emirate on Aug. 2, 1990, Iraqis were said to have opened the taps of Kuwait's coastal oil terminal, creating one of the world's largest oil spills. By the time they retreated to Iraq seven months later, they were accused of blowing up and setting ablaze 775 oil wells.

This winter, Kuwait has been plagued with an unusual number of sand storms, and environmentalists point an accusing finger at the heavy allied tanks and the Iraqi trench system for disturbing the crucial top crust of sand.

There has also been a marked increase in asthma cases. No hard studies exist, though, that would link that to the black clouds that floated over the emirate from just before liberation last Feb. 26 and November 1991, when the last of burning oil wells was capped.

The Greenpeace report, titled "The Environmental Legacy of the Gulf War," said that "cancers and birth defects are probably among the most likely conditions to be experienced in the future."

But it predicts that with much of the pollution, it will take 30 years of study for such effects to be confirmed. It urged area governments to commit the resources to such studies.

Gulf soot was traced as far away as the Himalayan mountain range, but much of the feared global impact did not materialise because the smoke did not rise high enough.

The exploded wells also spilled up to 60 million barrels of oil onto the desert sands. Wrangling over the contract to clean them up went on for much of last year before Kuwait Oil Company decided to do the work itself with Bechtel as the main consultant.

The original 200 oil lakes are down to 130, said Ghazi Balushi, a spokesman for the government oil company. Tanker trucks pump the oil into vast reservoirs, where the sand settles and the oil is pumped off to be refined into diesel and other heavy fuels. The gasoline and lighter fuels have long since evaporated.

Mr. Balushi said there is no estimate how long the operation would take.

The oil slick on the waters of

the Gulf also seems to have left a devastating legacy.

While the oil seems to have floated over coral reefs, Greenpeace estimates that it killed from 15,000 to 30,000 offshore birds and destroyed the feeding grounds for 100,000 wading birds. Migrating birds mistaking the oil lakes for water have also been killed by the bundreds.

The oil still coats more than 550 kilometres of Saudi coastline, much of it unused beaches that are covered with a mat of hardened tar. In some places there is no sign of surviving marine life on shore and even into the shallows, Greenpeace reported.

The Greenpeace report urged the creation of new international laws to prohibit the deliberate use of the environment as a weapon, it also urged less dependency on fossil fuels.

Wrote Greenpeace: "More than any other war, the Gulf war brought into focus the environmental destruction caused by war and the need for protected the environment in times of conflict."

man 7, Agaba 17 Humidity readings: Amman 57 per cent, Agaba 32 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Abdul Aziz Taboun 783708
Dr. Mohammad Al Abdali 779599
Dr. Abdul Wahab Awad 840701
Dr. Bassam Farahidi 780200
Firas pharmacy 661912
Pardous pharmacy 778336
Al Akoma pharmacy 637005
Naioukh pharmacy 626762
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shimkan pharmacy 637660

IRBID:

Dr. Muzahen Al Rashid (—)
Al Shakra pharmacy (273825)

ZARQA:

Dr. Issa Al Osmari (—)
Khalifeh pharmacy 983417

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.
Anglican Church Tel. 623383, Tel. 628543.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Assyrian International Church Tel. 683326.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295.
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 623634, 654932.
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.

PRAYER TIMES

06:48 Fajr
04:05 (Sunrise) Dhuha
11:49 Dhuhur
15:02 'Asr
17:33 Maghrib
18:59 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweileh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 623785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 627400.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622066

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Clouds will increase gradually in the evening and there will be a chance for scattered showers of rain, particularly in the northern parts of Jordan. In Agaba, winds will be northerly fresh and seas calm.

Amman Min./Max. temp. 0/9
Agaba 7/18
Deserts 1/11
Jordan Valley 3/16

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 7, Agaba 17

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 611111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 611111
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 840701
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 771111
Radio Jordan 774111

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 642814
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 642814
Jabal Amman Maternity 642814
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shureidani 664174
Shureidani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 645865
Al-Musharraf Hospital 667270
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164
Italian, Al-Musharraf 777101/3
Al-Basrah, J. Amn 775111/26
Army, Marfa 891617/5
Queen Alia Hospital 620240/55
Oman Al-Hospital 674155
ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983532
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:00 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)

DEPARTURES

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12

Arabiyat lauds strong Jordanian-Sudanese ties

AMMAN (Petra) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament 'Abdul Latif' Arabiyat, Friday wound up a week-long visit to Sudan, where he attended the inauguration of the 300-member transitional Sudanese national assembly.

In an arrival statement, Dr. Arabiyat said he met with Sudanese President Omar Hassan Al-Bashir and other Sudanese officials, with whom he reviewed bilateral relations in all fields.

Dr. Arabiyat said he had the chance to look at Sudan's achievements in the various fields and noted in particular Sudan's ability to export part of its agricultural produce abroad.

He also said that Sudan had succeeded in meeting its local needs of cereals and vegetables, and had achieved self-sufficiency in this field.

The Lower House speaker noted the noble feelings of the Sudanese people towards their Jordanian brothers, and their respect for Jordan's national and pan-Arab stands towards Arab issues.

Dr. Arabiyat headed a four-member parliamentary delegation to Sudan to take part in the inauguration of the Sudanese national assembly in response to an invitation extended to him by the assembly's speaker.

Importance of increasing use of treated water highlighted

AMMAN (J.T.) — The World Health Organisation (WHO) Tuesday opened a five-day regional workshop on waste water treatment and re-use with the participation of 20 delegates from Jordan and other countries in the eastern Mediterranean region.

Consultants from Jordan, Cyprus and the United Kingdom are to address the meeting, which was called to discuss the re-use of treated water for agriculture and other purposes.

Working papers submitted by the participating countries will also be reviewed and the participants will be making tours of waste water treatment projects around the country, according to Health Ministry officials. Health Minister Aref Bataineh, who opened the meeting, stressed the need for the re-use of treated water for agricultural purposes, noting that Jordan's estimated treated waste water in 1990 was 43 million cubic metres and was expected to increase over the years.

The minister said that the re-use of treated water was one of the country's options in view of its limited water resources. He noted that as the sewerage network increases, more and more treated waste water was bound to be collected.

Already a great deal of treated water is in use for agriculture purposes.

Jordan was one of the earliest countries in the eastern Mediterranean region to realise the need for the treatment of waste water and took practical steps to deal in this regard, Dr. Bataineh added. He said that Jordan started its first waste water treatment plant in 1969.

As Jordan depends largely on rain water, of which 1050 million cubic metres would be needed by the year 2005, the minister said there was an urgent need to increase the re-use of treated water and alternative water sources.

A message to the opening session from the WHO Regional Director Dr. Hussein Jazairi was read out by a WHO official who stressed the serious water shortages and the need for alternative sources to be found.

The conference, which ends March 2, was organised in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank. The following countries are taking part in the meetings: Jordan, Bahrain, Egypt, Djibouti, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Sudan and Yemen.

Tunisian and Jordanian officials review bilateral cooperation, peace process

By Kirk Albrecht
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Tunisia's foreign minister, Habib Ben Yahya, met with Dr. Kamel Abu Jaber on Wednesday, saying the two held extensive discussions on bilateral relations between Jordan and Tunisia as well as the current Middle East peace talks.

Before leaving the country Thursday morning, Mr. Ben Yahya spoke with the Jordan Times about his visit to Jordan, in the midst of the country's worst snowstorm in decades.

"I came to Jordan at Dr. Abu Jaber's invitation, and our talks have been quite successful," he said, adding that "this is not the first time we have met." Mr. Ben Yahya also met with His Majesty King Hussein and Prime Minister Shafiq Zeid Ben Shaker.

While not disclosing any details, Mr. Ben Yahya said he and Dr. Abu Jaber held "consultation on issues of common interest, mainly the peace process."

He did indicate, however, that Jordan and Tunisia have agreed to set up further contacts on economic issues between the two countries, most probably after the month of Ramadan, which begins March 6th.

This would include a trade mission from Jordan visiting Tunisia, as well as convening a joint commission on economic cooperation in Amman, according to Mr. Ben Yahya.

Mr. Ben Yahya said he thought the future of growth in the Arab World was dependent on coordination and development of common interests between Arab countries.

With respect to the peace process, the Tunisian foreign minister noted that "since we are not taking part in the current talks, it is hard to make an assessment." He said Tunisia will wait until this round of talks is concluded before it evaluates progress.

Tunisia's only role to date in the peace process has been as a member of the Maghreb Union, which has been limited to observer status in the multilateral round of talks held in Moscow in the end of January.

He affirmed that Tunisia "has always said that we have to get (U.N.) Security Council resolutions implemented."

"Resolutions and international law are indivisible — at least those which do not seem to be creating controversy — 242, 338, and 425. We think that settle-

ments are illegal and counterproductive," he said, "and contradictory to the objectives of the peace process."

Mr. Ben Yahya noted that "there are high expectations on both sides" in the peace talks, but did not offer any solution from Tunisia.

"The Palestinians have their own idea of what a peace agreement should look like — we will leave it to them."

Mr. Ben Yahya was returning from a visit to the Gulf, where he met with leaders of several countries. Many Tunisian workers in the Gulf lost their jobs as a result of the Gulf crisis last year.



Her Majesty Queen Noor looks on at a conference on helping rural women in Geneva (Photo by George/Crystal)

Queen Noor elected to committee designed to help rural women

GENEVA (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor, who led Jordan's delegation to a two-day meeting here dedicated to discussing means of improving the standards of women in rural regions of the world, was elected member of a 15-member committee assigned to follow up the implementation of a set of resolutions and recommendations contained in the Geneva Declaration on Rural Women, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Petra said that the two-day meeting discussed hardships facing women in rural areas, their role in socio-economic development and ways in which these women can contribute to improving the standard of their own families.

The Geneva declaration, Petra

said, called for a greater role for women in the development process and demanded that various governments help women in the rural regions to contribute to an improvement in their family's standard of living.

The agency said the Queen held talks and gave press and television interviews in which she tackled a number of pressing questions related to the improvement of the life of women living in the rural areas of Jordan and their contributions to economic development.

A total of 60 first ladies from around the world attended the conference, whose main idea was to help millions of rural women to overcome poverty. The conference was organised by the International Fund for Agricultural

Development (IFAD), which said that an estimated 565 million rural women were living in poverty and few of the world's aid programmes are reaching them.

A survey conducted by the Rome-based IFAD found 66.2 million of the impoverished women were the sole heads of households. Among the main topics discussed was how to help rural women get access to credit, which the organisers said would enable them to carry out small businesses to improve their conditions.

The Queen was accompanied to the meetings by member of the Upper House of Parliament Laila Sharaf and the Noor Al Hussein Foundation Director Inam Al Mufti.

Refugee camp residents struggle to fix caved-in roofs from heavy snowfall

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

BAQA' AJERASH — As renewed snowstorms bit the Kingdom this last week, hundreds of tin roofs caved in and left up to 800 camp residents homeless, government officials said Friday.

Camp authorities said that while the Baqa'a camp had sheltered its homeless residents in the camp youth club and the camp mosques, other Palestinian refugee camp residents in the Kingdom had not been so lucky.

"In Jerash-Gaza camp about 500 roofs caved in on residences during the strong storm and then the roof of the mosque caved in too, so the people had no where to go," said Adel Nimer, a Jordanian government official involved in the clean up operations.

While army trucks and jeeps

provided much needed help in delivering sick people and pregnant women to hospitals, most "roofless" residents stayed with relatives in the Jerash-Gaza camp.

Camp residents said that the snowstorms had rendered their tin roofs "useless." Camp officials confirmed that the vast majority of homes in the both Baqa'a camp and the Jerash camp had tin roofs. One Jerash camp refugee said that 97 per cent of the roofs in his camp were made of tin.

In addition to caved-in roofs, residents said flooding and extreme cold caused problems during this last wave of snowfall. "We got up in the middle of the night to get the snow off the roof before it broke down," said Taher Mahmoud, a resident of Baqa'a.

Many residents erected

wooden poles in the centre of their rooms to hold up the tin and sometimes plastic roof coverings. While children played in the water and the melting snow Friday, camp residents were busy reconstructing their tin roofs.

Both the Baqa'a and Jerash refugee camps were built after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war to house Palestinian refugees.

Camp officials said that about 800 people were affected by the caved-in roofs in the two refugee camps. "The Al Hussein Camp is lucky," said one resident of Baqa'a. "They have cement roofs — not a single roof caved-in."

UNRWA officials said Friday that the Al Hussein Camp, based in Jabel Al Hussein in Amman, had suffered only minor damage because most of roofs of the 1948-built camp are made of cement.

300,000 children so far immunised in campaign against polio, officials say

AMMAN (J.T.) — Despite the unusual weather conditions, more than 300,000 infants and children under the age of five have received the anti-polio vaccine from the various health centres, hospitals and private clinics in the country, according to Ministry of Health officials.

So far only two infants were reported to have died of polio

and ministry officials said that the campaign will be extended for one more week in order to offer complete coverage.

The week-long anti-polio vaccination campaign started last Monday but was interrupted by the snowstorm which paralysed all businesses, government offices, schools and normal life in the country. The officials said

that there will be an extension for one more week so as to provide some 600,000 children below the age of five with immunisation.

The campaign was announced following the spread of polio among children, mainly in the Jordan Valley region, where Ministry of Health officials said at least 32 children and infants were infected.

JDA to organise dental day

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Dentists Association (JDA), in cooperation with the health and education ministries and the faculties of dentistry at the University of Jordan, the Jordan University of Science and Technology and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), will organise a dental day on March 2.

JDA President Irfan Sultan said the day aims at educating people on the importance of taking care of their mouths and teeth and informing them means of protecting their teeth.

During the day, a number of activities will be carried out, Dr. Sultan said. He added that volunteer doctors will examine and treat patients' teeth free of charge in Karak Governorate and in the Harsha cluster of villages, which lack proper dental care facilities.

He pointed out that the JDA's delegation, which will comprise 100 dentists, will accompany a mobile dental clinic, fully equipped with the necessary equipment to examine and treat any dental problems.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- ★ Art exhibition by Spanish artist Saad Esheiri at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Shakir Hassan Al Said at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery (10 a.m.-5 p.m.)
- ★ Graphic art exhibition by Sadik Kwalish at Baladina Art Gallery, Gardens Street.
- ★ Exhibition of publications by the University of Jordan's Scientific Research Deanship at the university.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "The Blue Rider" at Philadelphia University.

LECTURE

- ★ Lecture, in Arabic, entitled "Arab Nationalism in History" by Dr. Wafiq Qasbi at the Scientific and Cultural Centre of Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation — 6 p.m.

SYMPOSIUM

- ★ Symposium in Arabic, on "The Break-up of the Soviet Union" at the Royal Cultural Centre — 6 p.m.

FILM

- ★ English-subtitled German film entitled "Fitzcarraldo" at the Goethe Institute — 8 p.m.

The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

Due to weather conditions, the distribution of this week's issue of The Star has been delayed until Sunday 1 March. For more information call 648-298

UPSIDE DOWN... WE TURNED IT

For your shopping convenience and pleasure
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your nose and eyes
your legs and feet
your gifts and joy
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your outings and entertainment

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سيفواي

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975
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Resolve must not wane

THE TUG-OF-WAR between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's government and the Bush administration over linking the \$10 billion loan guarantees to halting Israeli settlement of the occupied territories is poised to come to a head before the June national elections in the Jewish state. With Shamir's tempo of defiance of Washington's renewed insistence on linkage reaching new heights, the respective positions of both countries appear to have hardened more than ever before and could be heading for a showdown. We need only look at last week's Secretary of State James Baker's testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives Appropriation Subcommittee in order to see that this might just be the case. In that testimony made it clear that Israel has but two choices: either to end totally its new settlement projects in Israel or risk getting nothing from Washington. Naturally, and characteristically of most American politicians perhaps, the secretary of state sounded a conciliatory note to Israel by suggesting that Shamir's government may complete its current housing programmes but would have to settle for a lesser amount in terms of loan guarantees, proportional to the amount earmarked for such current housing activity. He also exempted so-called security settlements from the ban. Nevertheless, Baker's unmistakable message to Israel was echoed later by U.S. President George Bush who voiced clear concern shared by the international community, especially the Arab World, that his credibility would be damaged beyond repair should he agree to Israel's terms for the requested loan guarantee.

The rhetoric emanating from the Jewish state lends additional support to the proposition that the standoff between the two countries is already there. Israeli Health Minister Ehud Olmert was blunt in his reaction to the latest wave of conflict with Washington when he said last week that if the White House persisted in its demand for a linkage and at the end withheld the loan guarantee, it, meaning the U.S., "will have bowed to the dictates of the Arab states and the Palestinians who are threatening that if the loan guarantees are given... they will abandon the peace talks." Shamir himself was even more openly defiant on the eve of the resumption of round four of the peace talks in Washington when he repeated his position that there would be no end to Israeli settlement construction on Arab territories regardless of the American stance. There is every hope that Washington will stick to its guns on this issue even though its seemingly acquiescence to the completion of already started settlements leaves much to be desired this issue. Besides being good politics in the ongoing U.S. presidential contest this year not to appear as budging on another massive handout to Israel at a time when more and more American are calling for more attention to the slackening U.S. economy the U.S. position is also good statesmanship vis-a-vis the U.S.-sponsored peace process. With not only the Arab parties but also the rest of the international community leaning heavily in favour of regarding the Israeli settlement programme as the litmus test for Israel's sincerity towards peace, the U.S. resolve against it must be extended to already started housing projects and even to so-called security installation. This is not to mention that yielding to Shamir's own dictates on the issue would give the wrong signal to the Israeli electorate and stands to swing the pendulum away from Yitzhak Rabin, the new leader of the Labour Party and the prime minister hopeful in the upcoming Israeli general elections.

In sum, the stakes in the present tug-of-war between the U.S. and its hitherto spoiled child are indeed high. Giving an inch to Shamir now would simply deal a death blow to all hopes and aspirations for peace in the Middle East. The Bush administration can only be commended for digging in its heels on the issue even though it is not as complete as one would have wished it to be.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I daily Friday paid tribute to all those officials, technicians and workers who exerted strenuous efforts during the recent snowstorm to restore normal life to the country. The paper said that there were some shortcomings on the part of certain departments and many people complained because of the disruption of electricity. Nonetheless, Jordanian citizens have been able to overcome all obstacles through their diligent and perseverant stand during the storm and close cooperation with the civil defence and Armed Forces, which rallied to reopen the roads under unusual circumstances. The paper said that the recent snowstorm was a hard experiment for Jordanians, who mobilised all their resources to deal with the consequences. Disruption of electric power was something expected in certain areas and people were patient with government workers, who fought against many odds to fix the damages, the paper said. It said that unusual weather conditions brought about unusual circumstances for everyone, but had it not been for the efforts on the part of the concerned departments and Armed Forces, many Jordanian citizens would have still been cut off and isolated. The paper said that one has to learn a serious lesson from the past storm and should be prepared for similar conditions that might call for further efforts and sacrifices in the future.

Al Dustour daily Friday described as very positive the U.S. administration's stand vis-a-vis the loan guarantees to Israel and said that such a position was bound to freeze Jewish settlement programmes in the occupied Arab lands. The paper said that the American stance, as expressed by the president and his secretary of state, James Baker, imply that the U.S. administration has adopted a new stand with which the Jewish state should reckon, forcing it to comply with the requirements of peace. The new U.S. stand will no doubt increase Washington's credibility in the Arab World as a main actor in the ongoing peace process.

By Richard Walker
Reuter

ATLANTA — The south, once a political and economic backwater, has become a key battleground in U.S. elections and may make or break President George Bush's fight to win a second four-year term against the Democrats' challenge this year.

A string of southern primary elections over the next few weeks will show just how deep — or how shallow — support for Mr. Bush runs as he grapples with economic recession, political analysts said.

In this region of conservative thinking and intense local pride, Mr. Bush faces a stiff challenge for the Republican nomination from right-wing commentator Pat Buchanan, especially in the primary in Georgia on March 3. Mr. Buchanan has little chance

of winning the nomination, but Mr. Bush will need solid victories in the south to bolster his claim to the nomination after Mr. Buchanan finished a strong second in the New Hampshire primary a week ago.

On the Democratic side, Bill Clinton hopes to follow the 1976 example of Jimmy Carter by winning primaries in his home region and then convincing northern primary voters that a moderate southern Democratic has the best chance to defeat a sitting Republican president in November.

Mr. Clinton will have a lot of persuading to do. In the last 30 years, the south has become one of the most loyal regions for the Republicans in presidential elections.

Mr. Clinton, the governor of Arkansas and the only candidate who speaks in a southern drawl, faces a growing challenge in the

south from former Massachusetts Governor Paul Tsongas, still riding the crest of his victory in New Hampshire.

Mr. Tsongas is campaigning hard in Georgia but Mr. Clinton is still far and away the favourite, political analysts say.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Never before has the south been so hotly contested.

The "Solid south" was for nearly a century a stronghold of white Democrats who clung to post-slavery racial segregation and a conservative economic and social outlook.

Party loyalties began to split in the 1950s as the Democrats moved to a more aggressive stand in favour of civil rights, alienating much of their southern white constituency.

But after three decades of sweeping political reforms, an end to segregation and fast population growth, the south has now become a trend-setter in U.S. politics, according to a new study by Harvard University Press.

"I don't think most people realise the old confederacy (of 11 southern states) is now the largest single region in the country both in people and for electoral votes in picking presidents," said political scientist Merle Black, co-author of "The vital south — how presidents are elected."

The south, still regarded as the poorest and most religious part of the United States, has voted solidly for Republicans in four of the last five presidential elections.

The new Republican "solid south" was the bedrock for Mr. Bush's 1988 victory over Democrat Michael Dukakis.

The only exception to the Republican tide was in 1976, when Georgia's Jimmy Carter swept 10 of 11 southern states and defeated incumbent Republican President Gerald Ford.

"The emergence of the south as a solid Republican base has revolutionised presidential politics," Mr. Black said.

"The Democrats lost their historic base and haven't yet come up with a strategy to recapture it or build a solid northern base," he said in an interview.

But Mr. Bush may be in trouble in the south due to the recession that has weakened his bid across the country.

His next primary challenge after Georgia will come four days later in South Carolina, where his main opponent may not be Mr. Buchanan but David Duke, the former Nazi and Ku Klux Klan leader from Louisiana.

Five southern states, including populous Florida and Texas, will vote March 10 on a make-or-break day of primary voting that has become known as super Tuesday.

Come November, Mr. Bush may find that the coalition of southern conservative and moderate voters which elected him in 1988 has disintegrated due to economic reverses, said Mr. Black.

"If Bush can keep his base in the south, he could survive," said Mr. Black. "But if the economy is bad enough that he's generally discredited by election time, even the south won't be with him."

Former Soviet Army forced into politics

By Ralph Boulton
Reuter

MOSCOW — The former Soviet army, torn by conflicts of national loyalty and lacking clear civilian control, is being forced increasingly towards an independent political role.

Forces Commander Marshal Yevgeny Shaposhnikov said last weekend after anti-government protests attended by army officers he saw no current danger of a coup. But he accepted there were elements nostalgic for the old Soviet Union.

Sergei Rogov, security analyst at the U.S. and Canada Institute, says Marshal Shaposhnikov personifies the quandary of the army. As commander he answers to no single head of state but to a council of commonwealth leaders in conflict with each other.

"The link between the army and the state has been broken and that is a very dangerous situation," Mr. Rogov said.

"The military feel abandoned to their own devices." Officers mounted the political stage last month with formation of a "co-ordinating council" to consider reform. All meetings are held in secret, but the mood is clear.

"The army is paying for the mistakes of politicians," its chairman told Pravda newspaper last week.

Failure of the August coup and the collapse of the Soviet State has not dampened the enthusiasm of hardliners for army intervention.

Lieutenant-Colonel Stanislav

Terekhov, a leader of the conservative Officers Union who led Sunday's rally against President Boris Yeltsin, says the army is losing patience.

"The powers in Russia... fear the military. They know that if the military act, it's the end of them," he told Reuters.

Mr. moustache General Makashov, stripped of his Volga-Ural command after the August coup, and Viktor Alksnis, known to opponents as the black colonel, stirred a crowd of 5,000 communist supporters with calls for restoration of the union.

But Mr. Makashov and Mr. Alksnis, though they feed lavishly off discontent in the forces, are not the stuff of coup leaders.

Mr. Makashov's dismissal after the August coup, an attempted seizure of power which failed to win the full backing of the forces, counts against him.

The younger, more dynamic Alksnis enjoys sympathy in the forces but could be too radical in style to win broad support.

Russian vice-president and air force General Alexander Rutskoi, critic of Mr. Yeltsin's economic reforms, emerges as one possible figure to marshal broad military support in crisis.

He also has the backing of many workers in the vast military-industrial complex that stands to lose from the army's decline.

"Rutskoi is a form of bridge between military and civilians," Grigory Revenko, aide to former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, commented.

But any outright coup, over-

throwing Mr. Yeltsin and imposing control over the whole of Russia or even, beyond Russia, the former Soviet republics, presupposes discipline and unity.

Those basic military virtues are evaporating by the day.

Uncertainty at the top of the military is compounded by wretched conditions and conflict on a lower level.

Ukraine, rejecting a joint commonwealth force, has ordered troops on its territory to swear loyalty to Kiev and is taking over military hardware — moves deeply resented by Russia.

Officers must decide whether to bow to President Leonid Kravchuk or rebel.

Marshal Shaposhnikov, seen by Kravchuk as a tool of Mr. Yeltsin, cited troubled Transcaucasia as a danger point. Azerbaijan, along with Ukraine and Moldova plans to set up its own army.

The navy, shaken by a dispute with Ukraine over the Black Sea fleet, faces its own problems.

Newspapers report cases of crews refusing to put to sea in protest over conditions.

If the probability of a "straightforward" coup is receding, the danger is growing of chaos in the force which alone made the Soviet Union a superpower.

"If things continue this way, I fear total fragmentation of society and of the country," Mr. Rogov commented.

"Russia itself could disintegrate into regions controlled by someone who relies in some cases on the military and others on some other force," he said.

Algeria slims cabinet to appease discontented

By John Baggaley
Reuter

ALGIERS — Algeria's rulers, keeping their strongmen in control, have brought new blood to a slimmer cabinet to try to appease discontented youth and Muslim fundamentalists, diplomats said on Sunday.

The five-man presidency, headed by Mohammed Boudiaf, 72, approved the new government late on Saturday after the quietest Muslim weekend in several weeks of running battles between Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) militants and security forces.

Two of the newcomers are dis-

But key posts of defence, interior, justice, energy and foreign affairs remain unchanged.

Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghozali remains at the helm and keeps control of the heavily indebted economy.

"The head of government... certainly judged it too hazardous to turn everything upside down at a stroke when an emergency programme is getting going to bring Algeria out of its long lethargy," said the independent Al Watan newspaper on Sunday.

Two of the newcomers are dis-

NEWS ANALYSIS

Two of the six new ministers, Said Guechi and Sassi Lamouri, are close to the fundamentalist movement. Mr. Guechi is a dissident FIS founder-member. Mr. Lamouri is an imam or mosque preacher, with links to the FIS, local commentators say.

"It's a definite attempt to show some change but I suspect it is largely window-dressing," said one western diplomat.

The new ministers, who include a woman in the Health Department, are backed by five new secretaries of state.

To streamline decision-making, six former ministries have been replaced by three. They merge transport with posts and telecommunications, culture with research, technology and the environment.

side members of the FIS and Socialist Forces Front (SFF) which headed the general election, scrapped last month after the first round.

The FIS took 188 seats out of the FIS 25 of 231 decided and both parties are calling for the poll to resume.

"It will have no effect at all on the FIS though it will go down well with educated opinion," the diplomat added.

The FIS has not yet reacted to the new cabinet but last week warned that militants might see violence as the only alternative if "serious dialogue" was not started and if it banned.

Interior Minister Larbi Belkheir, at the forefront of the authorities' vow to restore a "state of law", has started legal action to ban the party.

Mr. Ghozali brought in Mr. Guechi, a father of seven and trader from Setif, southeast of Algiers, as employment and professional training minister.

Mr. Guechi was ousted from the FIS top body during a meeting in Batna, south of Algiers, last year in a power struggle following the arrest of top FIS men.

He had called for dialogue with the authorities but lost to radicals in a vacuum that followed arrests of FIS leaders over unrest in June which led to a state of siege. The latest unrest led to the imposition of a state of emergency on February 9.

"Guechi is not going to carry any weight with the FIS," said the diplomat.

Mr. Guechi's inclusion angered veterans of Algeria's 1954 to 1962 independence war against France, Algiers Radio said.

Former guerrillas were meeting just outside Algiers, and the radio said many expressed "great disappointment" at the list. They were "particularly upset at the 'fundamentalist element now in the heart of the government'."

Mr. Lamouri, an imam in Algiers, is the new religious affairs minister, a frontline job in the anti-FIS struggle with the state seeking to re-establish control over the nation's 10,000 mosques.

"The reason the FIS is popular is because people want a better life," said another diplomat. "It's a bit simplistic to think that bringing in these people is going to convince them that this is coming."

THIS WEEK IN PRINT

No lessons learnt from times past

Reviewed by Elias Nasrallah

The snow storm, and in its consequences, the peace talks in Washington and a number of domestic issues in Jordan provided material for the local dailies in the past week.

Four snow storms before the recent one were not enough to teach the Jordan Electric Power Company (JEPCO) lessons to take precautions against disruptions of power to many areas, said a columnist in Al Ra'i daily.

Nazih said that as soon as the snowstorm hit the country many parts of Amman and other towns were engulfed in darkness cutting off the main source of heating since many houses use the central heating system. JEPCO was supposed to have benefited from the past experiences and should have taken extra measures to restore power as soon as the damages occur, the writer said.

A columnist in Al Dustour was critical not only of the electricity companies but also of other services. Saleh Al Qalab said that snowstorms in Jordan revealed that many of the roads were built by contractors cheating the country and escaping punishment.

He said that residents in southern Jordan reported that all roads and culverts built in the days of the Ottoman rule without the storms but, unfortunately, those built with the help of modern technology were all damaged in the first storm.

The writer said that many parts of the infrastructure, built with taxpayers' money, have been damaged, all be-

cause those responsible for their construction chose to cheat their country and their country men with no one asking them to account for their action.

Al Ra'i daily voiced the same criticism, noting that many of the roads in the Kingdom were badly affected by the first storm. It is true that the armed forces and civil defence, assisted by the municipal workers, were exerting their utmost efforts to deal with the storm, but most of the capital's roads remained blocked by snow due to shortage of road clearing equipment.

The government's decision to increase the price of fuel was tackled by a number of columnists and editorials.

Describing the measure as a balanced decision, Salameh Ekour, in Sawt Al Shaab, said that the government was keen on retaining the prices of kerosene and gas, as well as gasoline, thus preventing the rise in price of various commodities and services.

It increased the price of Diesel oil, which used to benefit truckers from outside Jordan, first grade gasoline, used by the rich, and fuel oil, used in heavy industries, he said. He added that at the same time the government was keen on introducing measures that would help the limited-income families; they would include compensation for the extra fuel cost and maintaining the price of bread and other commodities.

The government's decision to increase oil products prices

was applauded by Dr. Fahd Al Fanek, a columnist who had been advocating the move as an inevitable one in the course of implementing the economic restructuring programme, as agreed upon with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

By increasing the oil fuel prices, the government has ensured more revenues for the state treasury estimated at \$30 million annually, helped Jordanians to reduce fuel consumption and helped reduce the deficit in the budget, the writer noted.

His views were echoed by a columnist in Al Dustour who said that the increase in fuel prices was an inevitable move in view of the economic crisis the Kingdom is facing.

Taber Al Udwan said that Jordan has been facing one crisis after another since 1987 when it was announced that the country was heavily indebted to foreign countries and banks.

He said that the country's pressures increased in the wake of the Gulf crisis and its consequences on the Kingdom.

The current campaign against polio was discussed by a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab who paid tribute to the Health Ministry for its efforts.

But the writer, Ahmad Dabbas, called on the ministry to disclose the actual number of polio cases and to expose the shortcomings, if any, in the previous campaigns to provide effective doses to infants.

Another columnist in Al Dustour said that the polio cases underline the need for the country to introduce a comprehensive health insurance scheme.

Mousa Subeibi said that although statistics reveal that many of the Jordanian citizens are either covered by civil, military or private sector health schemes, at least 10 per cent of the population especially farmers and low-income groups of people do not benefit from any such health scheme.

Reflecting on the ongoing peace talks in Washington, Taber Al Udwan said in Sawt Al Shaab that from the progress of talks it is clear that the Shamir government is still intransigent and that the co-sponsors are required to exercise pressure on Israel to force it to comply with the requirements of peace.

Furthermore, Udwan said that the current election campaign in Israel is making it difficult for Shamir's government to take serious decisions concerning peace with the Arabs.

Describing the peace talks as facing a deadlock, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily said that while the heads of the four Arab countries participating in the negotiations are calling for the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions, Israel's leaders are busy themselves with the coming elections making it difficult for the Shamir government to take any decision.

Furthermore, the Israelis are insisting on their position of no halt to the Jewish settlement programmes against the views of the Arab negotiators who say that no progress can be achieved if this issue is not resolved, said Mohammad Kharrub.

Al Dustour daily said that the U.S. secretary of state's

statement about loan guarantees for Israel was most constructive. The paper said that the U.S. refusal to grant the guarantees was bound to help freeze the settlement programme.

Salameh Ekour said in Sawt Al Shaab that the settlement programme being carried out by Israel in the occupied Arab

territories represents the biggest stumbling block in the face of any peace between the Arabs and Israel.

The writer called on the Arab countries to refer the question of settlements to the Security Council which can order Israel to halt the programme and comply with the world community's wishes.

LETTERS

Parents like to learn

To the Editor:

I agree wholeheartedly with Dr. Marisabel Abu Jaber's article (Parents have a right to learn, February 24, 1992) but the question is how should parents go about learning?

I wish somebody would give us, concerned parents, practical guidelines to follow, or if that proves unfeasible then guide us to the available resources, such as literature concerning parenthood — if any is found — or any seminars that take place and are open to the public, or even specialised centres that would be qualified and willing to help ordinary parents who might have some questions.

Dr. Abu Jaber's article touches upon an important issue that I am sure many parents live through, but it does not offer any ideas (since clear-cut solutions do not exist, one can only try to make educated guesses about the best way to raise children).

Maybe some child education experts can venture to guide us parents, through articles, or any other means they see fit, as to their ideas on how best to raise a child.

Hana Ramadan,
Amman, Jordan.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

كردنا لينا

Randa Habib's
Corner

All is not so rosy

INDEED, snow has overwhelmed its stay in our midst. After all the hopes we had pinned on this white visitor, it seems that Jordanians had more than enough, and they now yearn for a sunshine over their now drenched plains.

Given the damages and huge losses left by continued snowfall and heavy floods, Jordanians would rather have a "truce" or a "cease snowfall" in order to catch up with the day-to-day life.

The melted snow generated from the five consecutive storms have filled the limited dams to their seams. And even more, the reservoirs flooded the already frost-bitten farmlands in the Jordan Valley and elsewhere.

Ditches have dotted almost every street in the Kingdom, electric current has been cut-off, water pipes have burst and shanty refugee dwellings have been erased.

Apart from the overall economic and administrative stagnation in the country, snowstorms also affected the lives of bread-winners who earn their wages on daily basis. All through the storms, these labourers lost their sole source of income, a situation which may affect their respective earnings for months to come.

We do not try to underestimate the positive effects of snow and rainfall on our semi-barren plains, but one has to be realistic and put a down to earth perspective of the situation. True we gained a lot, but nevertheless, we had our losses which have to be addressed.

It is about time our newscasters and radio commentators cover "the good, the bad and the ugly." Life has two facets and both of them should be highlighted, on their merits, be they good or bad.

So please newscasters, try to paint a realistic, down to earth picture of events. And do not try to put words in the mouth of people who try to post a complaint, or say that things were not as rosy as portrayed. Hear them out, and give concerned authorities a chance to help.

Talks make little headway

(Continued from page 1)

basis of the negotiations. According to the Syrians and Israelis, the latter also handed "documents including ideas" to the Syrians but both sides declined from divulging details. The Syrians said that the substance of the documents was "unacceptable."

Unlike the other delegations, the Lebanese has kept a very low profile and did not disclose much about the negotiations. But prior to the start of the talks that Lebanese delegation explained that its main concern was to emphasise the sovereignty of

Lebanon, especially after the series of Israeli raids in the week leading up to the negotiations, and begin negotiations over resolution 568.

Judging by the Israeli account, the Israeli-Lebanese talks remained deadlocked, especially that the Israelis tried to shift the emphasis on the presence of Lebanese and Palestinian fighters in South Lebanon.

Mr. Gul said on Thursday that Israel demanded an end to the presence of "all terrorists in Lebanon," and that it had given Lebanon a list of "terrorist groups and the number of their fighters present in Lebanon."

Foreign minister lauds

(Continued from page 1)

and will stick to principles that it holds.

He added that he thought "it was probably the first time an American secretary of state has stood his ground on what he considers a matter of principle."

Dr. Abu Jaber noted that the position taken by the Bush administration allows it to be "an honest broker" in the peace talks, adding that this is an attempt "to act in an even-handed manner" between Arabs and Israel in their disputes.

Mr. Baker told the congressmen that the loan guarantees, covering \$10 billion over five years, would not come through if Israel continued building settlements, which he has said for many months the Bush administration viewed as an "obstacle to

peace."

Mr. Baker indicated that Washington would be willing to grant part of the guarantees if Israel foregoes any plans for new settlement activity. According to the secretary of state, this would require setting up measures which would deduct the amount already put into housing starts since Jan. 1 from the total granted.

Israeli reaction to Mr. Baker's remarks was predictably negative. Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said, "We cannot under any circumstance go along with the principle that Jews have no right to live in this or that part of the land of Israel," making reference to the occupied territories.

But Mr. Baker left the decision entirely to the Jewish state. "The choice is Israel's," he told the congressional sub-committee.

Algerian official rejects charge

(Continued from page 1)

1933 that brought Adolf Hitler to power.

"If the citizens of that country had interrupted the progress of that party, Europe would have avoided millions of deaths," he said.

Mr. Haroun blamed the fun-

damentalists' popularity on poor economic conditions.

Those Algerians who are old enough to remember the 1954-62 war of independence against France are "progressive and democratic," he said, while younger people are more prone to the religious rigour of FIS.

By Anthony Lewis

BOSTON — President Bush is under such attack these days for lacking principle — for wavering on issues — that he is entitled to credit for one area in which he has made a principled commitment and stuck to it. That is his policy for peace between Israel and the Arabs.

No one can doubt that Mr. Bush cares about the issue, deeply and personally. He has worked at it from the beginning of his presidency. He seized the moment after the Gulf war to press a new proposal that actually got the parties to the negotiating table. And in all this he has taken considerable political risk.

Now his policy is up against an especially prickly question: whether to insist that Israel, in order to get American loan guarantees, stop building settlements in the occupied territories. In this time of political difficulty for him, will the president stay the course? I believe he will.

One reason for thinking so is that continuation of the peace talks hangs on the settlement question, as Mr. Bush is well aware. Any formula that provides billions of dollars in guarantees to Israel without effectively stopping its creeping annexation of the West Bank and Gaza would make it impossible for the Palestinians to stay at the table.

The key word, for American policy makers, is "effective." For more than 20 years U.S. administrations have opposed the seizing of land and building of settlements in the occupied territories, but the opposition has been pathetically ineffective.

The president and Secretary of State Baker know about that first-hand. In 1990 they arranged \$400 million in loan guarantees to Israel for housing new immigrants. Mr. Baker ardently negotiated conditions: that none of the money go to the occupied territories and Israel provide full information on what it spends in the territories.

But the conditions have had no effect. A report issued by the General Accounting Office last week found that the U.S. guarantees simply freed up other money that Israel spent in the West Bank and Gaza. And the Israel government did not provide the promised information.

Once burned, Mr. Bush and Mr. Baker will no doubt be twice shy. They are likely to require firm and enforceable rules that any U.S. loan guarantees will not allow Israel to spend other funds on housing and infrastructure in the occupied territories, and that there will be no new settlement construction.

The president is also likely to stick to his guns because his policy is good for Israel. It encourages Israel to make a choice that its political system has been avoiding but that world trends demand.

The choice is between peace and annexation. Israelis have long wanted peace. But their governments have pursued expansionist policies incompatible with peace.

It was possible to fudge the choice so long as there was no one to negotiate with anyway — so long as the Arabs refused to make peace. But now Arab delegations are actually negotiating.

An Israeli policy of refusing to make the territorial compromise necessary for peace has also required enormous American subvention. The billions in annual military and economic aid could be counted on while the cold war

was on and Israel helped to block Soviet ambitions in the Middle East.

But the cold war is over now, there is no Soviet threat and it is not so clear that American support at such levels can continue

indefinitely. Israelis themselves are increasingly restive at their dependence on the United States.

Moreover, the end of the cold war presents Israel with a great challenge and opportunity: to build a high-tech civilian eco-

nomy that would employ immigrants. But that can happen only if there is peace.

Secretary of State Baker, in talking with Israel's ambassador about the request for \$10 billion in loan guarantees, has made it

clear that the choice is Israel's. The United States wants to provide the guarantees, but only on terms that do not destroy the chance for peace.

If the president holds to that position, he will be doing both

Israel and the United States a service. He will put their crucial relationship on a more realistic basis for the post-cold-war era, to their mutual benefit.

— The New York Times.

Where Bush is right



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JORDAN MARKET PLACE

IOC to conduct 10,000 experimental blood tests

LE LECHERE (R) — More than 10,000 tests must be conducted in the next few months before blood testing can be introduced at the Olympics, medical officials have said.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is keen to adopt a blood test to detect the presence of EPO, a drug believed to be used by athletes as a substitute for blood doping.

Blood doping involves the removal of a quantity of blood which is restored to the body just before competition to enhance the circulation of oxygen to the muscles. It has been known to have been used by athletes to improve performance.

The same effect can be achieved by using EPO, the hormone drug erythropoietin which is routinely used to treat kidney patients suffering from anaemia.

Prince Alexandre de Merode, chairman of the IOC Medical Commission, said on the eve of the Winter Olympics that de-

velopment of the EPO test had been virtually completed.

He was keen to introduce experimental blood testing at the Albertville Games but met opposition from within the IOC.

However, De Merode told a news conference Saturday that extensive checks were still needed to determine the effectiveness of the test.

He said the IOC had to be sure there were no significant blood variations among different racial groups.

"We need to carry out a large number of experiments to be certain of efficiency," Prince Alexandre said.

"More than 10,000 tests will be carried out in the coming months. We need to be sure there are no (racial) variations according to the type of individuals," he added.

France, Belgium and Britain had agreed to take part in further experiments although no word had been received from Germany

or the United States, Prince Alexandre said.

He added that it was not yet possible to say when blood testing would be introduced at the Olympics. "The time frame is not easy to set," he said.

Prince Alexandre increased suspicion that athletes had used EPO when he added: "We know that EPO has been stolen from some hospitals, and probably not to treat patients."

Blood specialist Professor Francesco Conconi said that research indicated that EPO caused some change in blood structure. EPO increased the size of red cells and raised the haemoglobin level.

"The effect is to increase the aerobic power of athletes, improving performance in events lasting from four minutes to two hours," he said.

Research had been carried out on 20 athletes who had been treated with EPO and 230 who had not.

Nelson, Fenech both want to fight Whitaker

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Talk to Azumah Nelson and the name of Pernell Whitaker figures prominently in the conversation.

Talk to Jeff Fenech and the same name keeps cropping up. Veteran Nelson defends his World Boxing Council (WBC) super-featherweight title against Fenech at Princess Park Sunday and both fighters have undisputed lightweight champion Whitaker as their next target.

Nelson and Fenech fought to a controversial 12-round draw in Las Vegas on June 28 last year. Many ringers thought the unbeaten Fenech, an Australian, deserved a win.

Sunday's rematch is expected to draw a crowd of close to 40,000 in a land where Fenech is a national hero.

The Australian has a 26-0-1 record and has previously held the IBF bantamweight and WBC super-bantam and featherweight titles. Only sugar Ray Leonard, Thomas Hearns and Roberto Duran have so far won world titles in four different weight divisions. Fenech aims to join them.

Nelson, the 33-year-old champion from Ghana, has a 34-2-1 record.

The only losses on his record are to Salvador Sanchez in 1982 and to Whitaker in 1990, when he moved up to lightweight and lost on points.

"I badly want to fight Whitaker again. I wasn't myself last time we fought," Nelson said. Fenech has never met Whitaker, but also is itching for a crack at the American.

"I've always talked about winning five titles before I retire and a match against Whitaker would capture the imagination of the boxing world," Fenech said.

"But first, I have some unfinished business with Azumah," Fenech was incensed by the Las Vegas decision and believed Nelson was given breathing space when in trouble between the ninth and 10th rounds.

Nelson's cornermen lost their fighter's mouthguard between rounds, causing a delay of over a minute.

WBC supervisor Gabriel Penagaricano issued orders at Friday's pre-fight rules meeting that both corners should have spare mouthpieces, gloves and bootlaces on hand.

"It's six months too late," Fenech said.

Fenech had Nelson's trainer, Buffalo Munoz, exchanged jibes at the meeting, and Munoz accused the Australian of being "a dirty fighter."

"Just bring enough mouthguards," Fenech responded.

Fenech said Friday he was nervous, but in top physical condition.

"I'm so light now that I can afford to put on a pound before the weight-in," Fenech said.

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Siemerink upsets Edberg in Rotterdam

ROTTERDAM, Netherlands (AP) — Dutchman Jan Siemerink played a confident game to upset top-seeded Swede Stefan Edberg in straight sets in the second round of the ABN Tennis Tournament. Siemerink, ranked 42nd in the ATP Tour, lost his first service game against the world's second-ranked tennis player and holder of four Grand Slam titles. But Siemerink came back quickly, playing the net sharply and aggressively to claim a first set tie-break and take the second set with remarkable ease to finish 7-6 (7-5), 6-2. The 21-year-old Dutchman has won only one singles title in his tennis career, last year in Singapore. Second-seeded Boris Becker of Germany, ranked fourth by the ATP, also won straight sets victory, beating Swede Andre Jarryd 6-2, 6-4. In other seeded play, fifth-seeded Croatian Goran Prpic prevailed in a marathon tie-break to win 7-5, 7-6 (10-8) against Dutchman Tom Nijssen. Seventh-seeded Russian Aleksandr Volkov knocked out American Jim Grabb in yet another of the day's straight set decisions, scoring 6-3, 6-3.

Mancini, Sanchez advance in Arizona

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona (AP) — Top-seeded Emilio Sanchez of Spain easily advanced to the quarterfinals of the \$260,000 Purex Tennis Championships Thursday night with a 6-2, 6-0 win over France's Thierry Champion. Earlier Thursday, No. 4 seed Alberto Mancini of Argentina started slow, but overcame a twisted ankle to beat countryman Gabriel Markus 4-6, 6-4, 6-2 in the second round. Also, fifth-seeded Malvi Washington of Swartz Creek, Michigan, got past Peruvian Jaime Yzaga 6-4, 6-3 and No. 7 seed Brad Gilbert of San Rafael, California, advanced with a 6-2, 6-2 win over Glenn Layendecker. Sanchez, ranked 10th in the world, needed just 57 minutes to eliminate the 48th-ranked champion. Mancini, ranked No. 22 in the world, struggled through an error-filled first set, twisting his ankle leading 2-1 in the second set. After getting his ankle taped, the 22-year-old clinched the fourth game with an ace and did it again in the next two service games.

Seles, Fernandez advance at Evert Cup

INDIAN WELLS, California (AP) — Top-seeded Monica Seles, ranked No. 1 in the world, defeated Tami Whitlinger Thursday to advance in the Evert Cup tennis tournament. It took 76 minutes for Seles to beat Whitlinger 6-2, 6-3 in the third round of the \$350,000 tournament at the Grand Champions Resort. Seles attributed her longer-than-usual match to the hot weather and unfamiliar turf. "It was definitely hotter today," Seles said. "I have played earlier here before. This is a different court than I'm used to so it takes a few matches to get used to. She is a tough player." Seles faces seventh-seeded Gigi Fernandez in the quarterfinals. Fernandez advanced after beating Ginger Helgeson, 6-4, 6-3. Seles and Fernandez played each other at last year's U.S. Open, also in the quarterfinals. Seles won that match in straight sets, 6-1, 6-2. Asked about facing Fernandez this year, Seles said: "I've got to come in every chance I can. She is a tough player. I'll just try to put my game together."

Holyfield to fight Holmes

NEW YORK (AP) — Heavyweight champion Evander Holyfield will defend his title against former champ Larry Holmes in June at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas, Holyfield's manager Shelly Finkel said. "In the next day or two it will all be together, and we'll make a formal announcement," Finkel said. "We're meeting with people from Caesar's and TVKO to wrap things up." TVKO is a monthly pay-per-view boxing series that will televise the bout. Discussions scheduled for Wednesday also will focus on a fight date. Holyfield's management favours June 8, but TVKO would prefer to televise the fight June 19, according to Mike Boorman, a spokesman for Main Events, Holyfield's promoter. All sides refused comment on the purses of the fighters.

Rodriguez beats Lopez

IRVINE, California (AP) — Danny "Little Red" Lopez, away from the ring for a dozen years, was knocked out 37 seconds into the second round by Jorge Rodriguez in a scheduled 10-round junior lightweight bout. Lopez, who retired in 1980 after being knocked down by Salvador Sanchez in consecutive fights, was cut under the right eye in the first round. He was caught flush by a right hand early in the second and went down heavily on his side. Referee Larry Rozadilla stopped the bout for the sluggish 39-year-old Alhambra resident. Lopez, whose free swinging style was one of the most exciting on the World Boxing Council (WBC), defended his WBC featherweight title eight times before losing to Sanchez. He won the WBC championship in 1976 over David Kotey in Africa in an upset decision. Lopez falls to 42-6 with 39 knockouts.

FIFA gives 4 states provisional rights

ZURICH (R) — Soccer's world governing body FIFA granted provisional rights to the newly-formed soccer associations in Croatia, Slovenia, Georgia and the Ukraine. A FIFA statement said the provisional rights given ahead of formal recognition by its congress in July would enable the associations to draw up internal transfer regulations and arrange transfers with other associations. They would also now be entitled to play friendly matches at international level with clubs and other nations. FIFA said it considered the football association of the Commonwealth of Independent States as the legal successor to the former Soviet football federation until further notice. This association would also for the time being be responsible for arranging international transfers for players from Belarus, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, FIFA said.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY FEBRUARY 29, 1992
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Unusual ideas come into the picture today. Be sure that you make a point to seize them once. Put yourself in a position to use your revitalized energy to attain your ambitions.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Consider your usual tasks, whether they are at home, in the world of action, in salesmanship, shops or places of business and improve them.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) A very pleasant day to make whatever appointments are available at the entertainments and amusements you like and then enjoy them as you like.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You can get right at whatever requests your attention to your residence and improve and make it just as you wish it to be in the future.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You have little trouble now in convincing those with whom you have contact to understand reports and plans you have to improve activities.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) A very good chance is now present for you to do whatever will increase the value of your property or make more presentable your holding to others.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You certainly will find a lot of reaching out that can gain you the

many personal things for which you have been bending your best efforts for.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A very good time for doing whatever will bring you closer to your intimate aims and you can find the best means to plan a campaign to get them.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Look up your most discriminating and specialized friends who can be of service to you in gaining your fondest wishes and let them know your wishes.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) The world can be your oyster today and tonight if you go after outside ambitions in a highly particular and very specific manner.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You like to be aware of all phases of any course of action that comes to your attention and as new ones are at your fingertips pursue them with care.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Whatever your activities now by approaching them from a well organized and consistent fashion you will be able to make them pay off for you.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Much conversation between an associate and yourself is the best means by which to come to a more complete understanding on how to gain joint aims.

Indurain, Lemond to race in Tour Du Pont

WASHINGTON, D.C. (AP) — Tour De France champion Miguel Indurain of Spain and Greg Lemond, a three-time winner of that event, will compete in the streamlined Tour Du Pont bicycle race.

The 1,000 mile (1,609-km) stage race, reduced in length about 150 miles (241 km) from last year, will begin on May 7 in Wilmington, Delaware, and conclude on May 17 at RFK Stadium in Washington D.C.

"This will definitely be one of the toughest races of the year," said Lemond, leader of the "Z" team. "I remember the suffering from last year's race. It's a tough race. People think the east is flat,

but they're wrong. It is always rolling, which gives you no time to recover on the flats."

The race, which began in 1989 as the Tour De Trump, is the largest cycling event in the United States. The field, which will include 13 professional and the three amateur teams, will race through a middle-Atlantic region encompassing Delaware, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C.

In addition to four U.S. teams, seven-rider professional and amateur squads based in Spain, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Colombia, France and the Commonwealth of Independent States

are scheduled to compete.

The 11-stage, point-to-point race will include seven road races, three individual time trials and two circuit races.

"We have shortened the race by almost 150 miles from last year," said Michael Plant, the event's executive director. "But we have made it more mountainous, which should make the race more intense."

In addition to finishes in such cities as Richmond, Virginia, Dover, Maryland, and Hershey, Pennsylvania, the race will also feature stages in the Allegheny, Blue Ridge and Pocono Mountain ranges.

Trousers - Skirts - Jackets - Jump Suits - Shirts - Leather Texas Boots

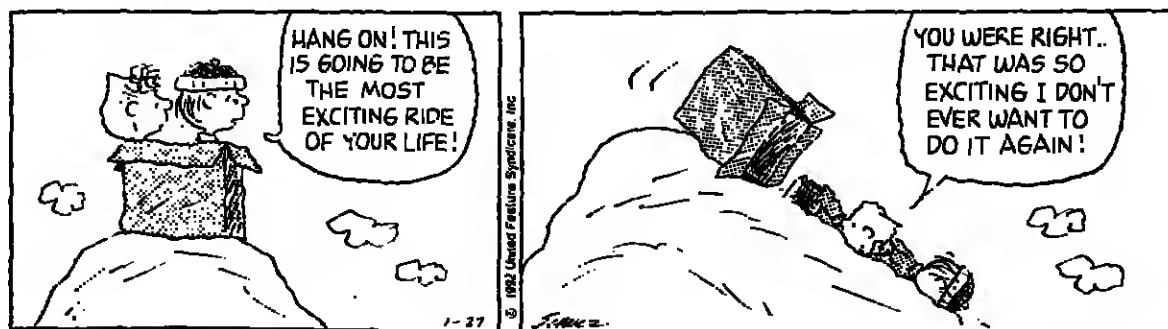
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LEGENDS TO HEAR,
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TO REMEMBER
& JEANS TO WEAR**

Gloria Estefan
24/8/1991

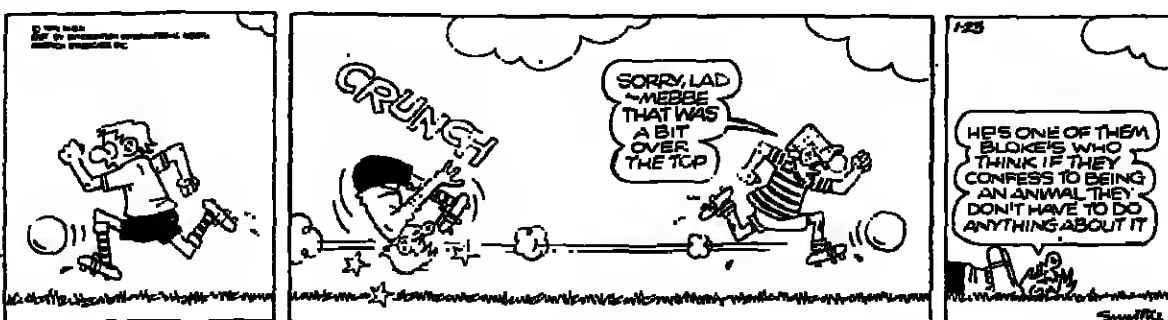
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Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMARA HIRSCH
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A GRAND SACRIFICE

Neither vulnerable, North deals.
NORTH
♠ 6
♥ A J 7 6
♦ 10 9 7 6 2
♣ A 6
WEST
♠ K 10 9
♥ K 9 3 2
♦ 5 3
♣ K Q 10 5
EAST
♠ 3 2
♥ 4
♦ A K Q 8 4
♣ J 9 4 3 2
SOUTH
♠ A Q J 7 6 5 4
♥ Q 10 5
♦ J
♣ 8 7

The bidding:
North East South West
2 ♠ Pass 3 ♠ Pass
4 ♠ Pass 5 ♠ Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠
Great Britain won the European Championships held in Killybeg, Ireland, some six weeks ago and qualified to lead that continent's four-team contingent to the 1991 World Team Championships, to be held in October in Japan. The award for the best defense went to Ireland's Pat Walshe for his sparkling effort on this hand.
The Polish North-South were using a highly artificial bidding system. North's two-diamond opening bid promised either a red or a black

two-suiter, and South's jump to three spades was invitational, showing a one-suited hand of 6-10 points.
We find North's raise to game incomprehensible.
Walshe, West, led the king of clubs. Declarer won in dummy and tried the spade finesse, losing to the king. Can you spot how Walshe defeated the contract?

West found the only card to force declarer to concede—he shifted to the king of hearts! Declarer won that in dummy, but now had no way to return to hand to draw the remaining trump. Declarer did as well as possible by leading a diamond toward the jack in the closed hand, but East was able to win and reach West with a club. Another heart allowed East to ruff for a one-trick set.

Looking at all four hands, it is easy to see that declarer could have avoided defeat by playing ace and queen of spades. But we are blessed with the knowledge that the heart finesse will work—information not available to declarer. Instead, let's credit Walshe with a brilliant defense for realizing that it was essential to shift to the king of hearts, and that a low heart would have made declarer's life easy.

THE BETTER HALF.



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

ELLEB
KNACS
REMMOY
BOWELL

Answer here: YOU (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble: LEAVE ALIVE KISMET FOIBLE
Answer: It takes best to do the MAKE BEERSTEAK

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS
1 Repaired building for short
6 Stadium
10 — boy
14 — Gay
15 Shakespearean actor Edmund
16 Boutique
17 Tennis score
18 Horse's gait
20 Cardinals
21 Car, informally
22 Trial
23 Portions
25 — Guild
28 Prompter's job: var.
29 Bride's gift to the groom
30 Preps agree to
31 Blockhead
34 Island in Formosa Strait
35 Outpouring
36 McCartney
37 Place or village
38 Have thoughts
39 Triangular symbol
40 Enthusiastic
42 Reveal
43 Best deals
44 Show host once
45 City in Italy
46 Canned fish
50 — Long Syne
51 Bronze medal position
53 Corner
54 Long periods
55 Some voices
56 Minus
57 Leave
58 Eating times

DOWN
1 Km. abbr.
2 Plenty old style
3 — to (formerly) down
4 Concerning chance
5 Pitcher and catcher
6 Get around
7 Possessive
8 Corrode
9 Whatever the place
10 Toward the rear
11 Hat trick
12 Kt items
13 Residences
14 —
15 Dame Myra
22 Tresses
24 Retinue
25 "Madam, I'm —"
26 Unconscious state
27 Pair of the rarest
28 Michael of tennis
30 Having thorns
32 Self: pret.
33 Ousted tart
35 Vigorous
36 US labor leader
38 Herzhiser

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:
PARA PAER KANCA
RUE AUTO ALIAN
ADAM BROT SIDER
MAGNAN ARIAN
BELL ONE EEE
LADDER SNAKE
PREMIERATION
BEAT BADA BIRAN
BIBBS PHICAN
OUR BOO MAE
OBERON PANDORA
MAGNIFICENT EEEE
ARLE ARTE TEAR
DOLLER STAY BOON

39 Blank face
41 Change
42 Terminals
43 Hog fat
45 Composer
46 Sch. subj.
48 Meeting: abbr.
52 — polli

Survey provides further evidence that American consumers are hunkering down for bleaker times

NEW YORK (AP) — American consumer gloom deepened this month to the lowest level since the severe recession of 1974, the Conference Board said in a widely followed survey that disturbed economists.

The business research group said its monthly survey of consumer sentiment reflected a haunting fear created by the daily barrage of layoff announcements and corporate cutbacks. Nearly a third of the survey respondents predicted fewer job opportunities in months ahead.

"The numbers are a very dreary assessment of the job situation, and that's where it's all at," said Fabian Lindner, executive director of the Conference Board survey. "The labour world out there is very shaky."

The results offered further evidence that American consumers, whose spending is critical to a revival of the economy, are hunkering down for bleaker times.

If that attitude prevails, economists said, the current downturn could last longer than previously thought. When consumers spend less, merchants sell less, factory orders decline and unemployment increases.

The Conference Board's consumer confidence index dropped from a January reading of 50.2 to a February reading of 46.3. That is the lowest level since a reading of 43.2 in December 1974, when the nation was gripped by high unemployment and inflation.

The index, based on a 1985 adjusted base of 100, is calculated from responses to questions sent to 5,000 households nationwide, covering topics that range from vacation plans to the outlook for employment and business.

"The public's assessment of the current situation continues to be bleak. Half the respondents, for example, felt present business conditions are bad, half feel jobs are hard to get and more than a third feel job opportunities will decline in the future," the survey showed.

Economists consider the index a useful tool in determining the American consumer mood. Many had been expecting the results to show an increase in consumer confidence because of other recent signs that the economy is picking up, notably an increase in sales of homes, cars and other merchandise.

Even Alan Greenspan, the chairman of the Federal Reserve (Fed), who was testifying about the economic outlook in Congress when the Conference Board survey was released, said the results were disturbing and conflicted with his guardedly optimistic assessment about a recovery.

Some economists said the consumer gloom over unemployment seems unfounded, since the jobless rate, at 7.1 per cent, remains substantially lower than the last recession in 1982 and the more severe one in 1974.

But others said the Conference Board survey's results should have come as no surprise, given the level of anxiety among many Americans about their job security.

Mr. Greenspan said he believed signs of a recovery should become apparent in weeks, but he pledged to cut interest rates again if the long-awaited rebound fizzles.

Mr. Greenspan's assurances, however, failed to satisfy members of the Senate Banking Committee, who said the Fed's timidity in moving aggressively to lower rates had worsened the country's economic troubles.

For his part, Mr. Greenspan insisted that the Fed's credit easing was having a positive impact on housing and other interest-sensitive parts of the economy.

"We are having an effect. The question is, 'are we having enough of an effect or is more required?'" Mr. Greenspan told

Aquino drums up economic recovery

MANILA (R) — The battered Philippine economy is set for recovery, with inflation falling and the country's currency strengthening against the dollar, President Corazon Aquino has said.

"No doubt our economy has finally turned around," said Mrs. Aquino in a speech at the launching of a gold coin commemorating her six years in power. "Economic indicators support this."

"Calamities and disasters, failed coup attempts and other insurgencies only serve to help us grow from strength to strength," declared Mrs. Aquino, who was swept to power in a popular revolt in February 1986.

Mrs. Aquino said that despite the six coup attempts by right-wing army rebels and a series of natural disasters which hit the country over the past two years, the economy was recovering from zero growth last year.

"There has been a wave of invigorating change and more good things for our people," said the president.

She said the balance of payments was strengthening, inflation was falling and the country's currency, the peso, was appreciating against the U.S. dollar.

Mrs. Aquino's rosy outlook followed agreement with overseas banks in New York to restructure \$5.3 billion of Philippine commercial debt, and approval by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to resume lending to the heavily-indebted country.

The Philippines has total overseas debt of \$29 billion.

The government foresees growth in real Philippine gross national product (GNP) recovering to 2.5-3.0 per cent in 1992 from zero last year. Businessmen say the recovery could be sharper after may presidential elections.

But the government has removed much slack in the economy with a tight monetary policy designed to drive down inflation, which has fallen from a six-year high of 19.3 per cent last September to just under 10 per cent in January.

Businessmen have been worried by the appreciation of the



Corazon Aquino

Abu Dhabi lends Syria \$250 million

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria will get \$250 million in loans from the Abu Dhabi government to finance three development projects, Syrian officials have said.

The money will come from the Abu Dhabi Fund for Economic Development, the agency through which the emirate uses its oil wealth to offer cheap loans to developing countries.

No details of the terms were available.

The loan accords were signed in Damascus by Syrian Planning Minister Sabah Baqajji and agency chief Nasser Al Noweis.

The money will help raise production capacity in electricity, textiles and cement.

The first loan would help raise the capacity of gas-fired electricity generators near Damascus. The second would double the production of a cement plant, also near Damascus, to two million tonnes a year while the third would increase production at a textile mill.

Mr. Noweis, who is also undersecretary at the United Arab Emirates finance ministry, had talks with Syrian Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam on economic cooperation.

The Gulf Cooperation Council states said they would reward countries which a year ago helped the U.S.-led alliance against Iraq.

Syria was one of the key Arab members of the alliance.

Algeria to set up economic think tank

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria is to set up an economic think tank to advise the government on strategy and provide an objective evaluation of the economic and social situation.

Prime Minister Sid Ahmad Ghazali told a news conference for local journalists that the group would be independent and made up of neutral Algerian experts.

Speaking after Algeria's new cabinet held its first meeting, centred on the economy and unrest which has shaken the country, Mr. Ghazali said he did not oppose privatisation of parts of the economy. But he would not make this a matter of principle at the cost of the public sector which had to be strengthened out.

Public enterprises, which make up about 80 per cent of the economy, have debts of some 300 billion dinars (\$13.6 billion), the Algerian news agency APS said in a report of Mr. Ghazali's news conference.

OPEC official suspects ploy to control world energy markets

CAIRO (R) — An OPEC official has questioned the phenomenon of global warming and said a proposed EC carbon tax to combat it was a ploy to control world energy markets.

"We do not know whether global warming is a certainty or not," Mohammed Al Sahlawi, head of OPEC's news agency, told a symposium of economists. "Is there really a man-made problem, or is it part of a natural cycle?"

The European Commission proposes to introduce a tax of \$1 per barrel of oil in 1993 to fight global warming and curb demand

for oil. The tax would rise to \$10 a barrel by the year 2000.

But Mr. Sahlawi said it was designed to control energy markets in favour of the consuming countries.

"A proposed \$10 a barrel energy-carbon tax... (is) an attempt to regulate the energy market in a way which we believe will be disadvantageous to OPEC countries," he told about 60 analysts at the symposium, organised by the Japanese think-tank JIME.

"We do not object to the creation of some order in the energy markets... but we are not going

Kuwaiti oil production reaches 640,000 b/d

KUWAIT (R) — Oil Minister Hamoud Al Rqobah has said Kuwait's total crude output had reached 640,000 barrels per day (b/d) and would top 700,000 barrels next month.

The new figure is up from 600,000 b/d a month ago and includes Kuwait's share of 140,000 b/d from the Neutral Zone shared with Saudi Arabia.

The minister told a news conference production would receive a modest boost in March with the first post-Gulf war contribution from Al Wafra field in the south.

Output from Al Wafra would be 50,000 b/d in March and shared equally between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, he added.

Wafra is separate from the Neutral Zone.

Kuwait had drilled 30 new wells and planned to increase the number of rigs to boost production which Sheikh Rqobah says will top 1.5 million b/d by the end of 1992.

Oil industry sources told Reuters Kuwait's total capacity might reach two million b/d by the end of this year, almost the level before Iraq's invasion.

With crude production on the rise, Kuwait is pressing for a higher quota within the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries. Its pre-invasion quota was 1.5 million b/d.

Sheikh Rqobah said a total of 120 wells were producing last week, up three from the last count.

There are at present 10 oil rigs drilling wells. The oil sources said the number would top 20 by the middle of the year.

Bahraini exports, imports rise

MANAMA (R) — Bahrain's exports in the third quarter of 1991 rose to 297.9 million dinars (\$788 million) from 294.4 million (\$778.8 million) in the second quarter of the year.

Figures from the Bahrain Monetary Agency (BMA) showed oil income in the third quarter of 1991 stood at 249.1 million dinars (\$659 million), compared to 225 million dinars (\$595 million) in the second quarter of 1991.

Bahrain, the smallest Gulf Arab oil exporter, produced around 42,000 barrels of oil per day, although it was the first to discover oil in 1932.

Non-oil exports in the third quarter 1991, declined to 48.8 million dinars (\$129 million) from 69.5 million (\$183.8 million) in the second quarter.

Bahrain's imports in the third quarter of 1991 rose to 404.4 million dinars (\$1,07 billion) from 349.3 million (\$924 million) in the second quarter, 1991.

Oil imports, mainly from Saudi Arabia, climbed to 150.9 million dinars (\$399 million) from 135.7 million (\$359 million).

General Motors reports biggest loss in U.S. corporate history

DETROIT (R) — General Motors (G.M.) Corp has reported a \$4.45 billion loss for 1991, the biggest in U.S. corporate history, and told 16,000 workers they would lose their jobs as it bid to return to profitability.

The loss at the world's largest vehicle maker caps the worst year ever for the U.S. vehicle industry. Ford lost \$2.26 billion and Chrysler \$795 million last year, bringing losses at the big three carmakers to \$7.51 billion in 1991.

The weak U.S. economy has battered car sales as Americans put off buying big-ticket items like new cars while competitors, particularly the Japanese, have expanded their share of the U.S. market.

Much of G.M.'s loss was due to a \$2 billion pretax charge to pay for one-time expenses from a cost-cutting plan G.M. announced in December. Under the plan, the carmaker will close 21 plants and cut 74,000 jobs over four years.

G.M. Monday cut 16,299 jobs, or nearly one-quarter of its target, at 12 plants.

"In 1991, the North American automotive industry sustained losses unparalleled in its history. General Motors is taking aggressive action to reverse this trend and improve its competitiveness," Chairman Robert Stempel said in a statement.

"It's clear we're not getting any help from the government. It's clear we're not going to put any restrictions on the market," Mr. Stempel told reporters. "My God, we're going to have to compete. That means you have to be lean and get your costs down."

In the fourth quarter, G.M. lost \$2.47 billion, compared with a loss of \$1.62 billion in the 1990 period. For all of 1990, G.M. lost \$1.99 billion, previously its biggest annual loss ever.

Financial analysts said G.M.'s 1991 loss was the biggest in U.S. corporate history, exceeding the \$4.41 billion loss of the giant Texaco Inc. lost in 1987, the year it settled a big court case.

G.M. also released details of 12 plant closings under its restructuring. It had previously announced two other plants would close.

G.M. said it will close its Willow Run, Michigan, assembly plant, which had been in a life-or-death struggle with a G.M. plant in Arlington, Texas.

The closure of Willow Run, which produces Chevrolet, Oldsmobile and Buick cars, will mean the loss of 4,014 jobs. It will be shut by the summer of 1993.

The company's flagship North American operations continued to drown in red ink, accounting for the lion's share of the losses.

G.M. did not specify the size of the loss in North America, but analyst Tom Galvin of C.J. Lawrence Morgan Grenfell said G.M. lost \$5.5 billion on its North American operations last year, double 1990's loss.

Virtually all G.M.'s other operations showed profits, including a healthy \$2.1 billion profit overseas.

Faced with criticism about high executive pay despite its serious problems, G.M. also said it would save about \$14 million a year by trimming the pension plans of retired top executives, including that of former chairman Roger Smith.

Amman Financial Market		
Following is a summary of trading during last week and the previous week:		
	Feb. 22-26	Feb. 15-19
Daily average	JD 1,837,285	JD 1,866,593
Total volume	JD 5,511,855	JD 19,332,967
Total shares	2,719,872	9,735,448
No. of contracts	2,411	8,055
Sectoral trading:		
Industrial	JD 3,171,959 (57.5%)	JD 11,225,087 (58.4%)
Financial	JD 658,089 (11.9%)	JD 5,294,937 (27.4%)
Service	(27.4%)	(11.6%)
Insurance	(3.2%)	(3.6%)
Share price index	151.5	152.6
No. of companies	78	82
Price movement (rise)	10	36
(Decline)	46	26
(Stable)	14	20

* Last week trading covered only 3 days

7 charged for losses at Tunisian - Qatari bank

TUNIS (R) — Seven people have been charged in connection with irregular international operations which cost a Tunisian-Qatari investment bank \$42 million in losses last year, judicial source have said.

The people charged include the former managing director of the Banque Tunisiano-Qatar d'Investissement (BTQI), Tawfik Kalai, and the former head of foreign exchange operations at the bank, Jaleddine Touad, the sources said.

The others are Mr. Touad's deputy, another employee and three computer programmers from outside the bank who devised a programme which concealed the irregular operations.

The charges, which result from a six-month judicial inquiry, say most of the losses were incurred between June and September last year in money market dealings with two correspondents abroad — one in London and the other in Geneva.

Mr. Touad is accused of continuing to speculate in spite of regulations limiting the extent of losses.

The BTQI, based in Tunis and founded in 1983, has a capital of \$70 million, divided almost equally between the governments of Tunisia and Qatar. Its mission was to mobilise foreign funds for investment in Tunisia.

Keating unveils blueprint to tackle high Australian unemployment rate

SYDNEY (AP) — Prime Minister Paul Keating, hoping to stimulate Australia's sagging economy, has unveiled a blueprint to tackle the country's 10.4 per cent unemployment rate.

In an effort to boost his Labour Party's reelection prospects next year, Mr. Keating told parliament in a nationally televised address that he hoped to create 800,000 jobs by spending an extra 2.3 billion dollars through July 1993. Most of the money would be spent on infrastructure projects, such as railways, roads and aviation.

Other measures would raise consumer spending, provide tax concessions for businesses and allow foreign banks into the Australian market. Australia's international airline Qantas and foreign carriers will be permitted to fly some domestic routes.

The moves would enlarge the projected budget deficit to 6.8 billion dollars in the fiscal year ending June 30 and 8 billion dollars in 1992-93.

The budget was in surplus by 1.9 billion dollars last fiscal year, but fell on hard times as the economy sunk into one of the deepest recessions in 60 years.

In an effort to regenerate support among Labour's traditional power base, Mr. Keating said most households will get a pre-Easter gift of 125 dollars and an increase in welfare payments for needy families.

A cut in personal taxes for middle-income earners is planned for the mid-1990s. The sales tax on new cars will be immediately cut from 20 per cent to 15 per cent to help the troubled auto industry.

Despite the costs, the government projects that as the economy strengthens, the budget will be back in the black in 1995-96.

Dwindling energy supplies force Mongolia to begin wide-ranging power cuts

PEKING (AP) — Power will be cut in the Mongolian capital for six hours twice a week as part of a new plan to ration dwindling coal and oil supplies, a report has said.

Mongolia, a herding nation sandwiched between China and Russia, is experiencing an energy crisis because of a shortfall in shipments from the collapsed Soviet Union last year. There have been no new shipments this year.

The Chinese Xinhua news agency said in a report from Ulan Bator that the brown-outs would affect residential districts in the city of 500,000 people.

Electricity to factories will be rationed and television broadcasting time will be shortened by 4.5 hours each weekday, Xinhua said, quoting Mongolian press reports.

It said gasoline and diesel oil sales will also be rationed. The nation's stocks are only large enough to last 25 more days, it said.

The Soviet Union was Mongolia's only source of oil and gas. Mongolia mines its own coal, but the mines have nearly stopped running for lack of spare parts — which also used to come from the Soviet Union.

Many areas of Ulan Bator already have experienced intermittent power cuts, including the No. 1 hospital, which was supposed to be exempt from the cuts.

The cutoff of shipments from the former Soviet Union has led to critical shortages just as Mongolia attempts to transform itself from a communist dictatorship to a democracy with free markets and private enterprise.

In free elections in 1990, Mongolians chose a multiparty government committed to economic reform, but the shortages have stalled the reforms and created serious inflation, shaking popular confidence in the new course.

Meanwhile China's official New China News Agency said Mongolia has sought U.S. help to explore, tap and process its oil reserves and hopes to produce its first petroleum products by 1993.

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Armenia declares 'decisive moment' in Karabakh conflict Yerevan calls on all Armenians in CIS army to return home

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Armenia appealed Friday to its native sons serving in the former Soviet army to return home and help create a national army to protect their country from neighbouring Azerbaijan.

The call came a day after an Iranian-brokered ceasefire in the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave of Azerbaijan collapsed just hours after it began, with renewed shelling by both sides.

The Armenian Defence Ministry, in making the appeal, called this a "decisive moment for the motherland and the people," the ITAR-TASS News Agency reported. "The war unleashed by Azerbaijan against the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh threatens Armenia itself."

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati was in the Armenian capital, Yerevan, as part of his peace campaign.

"There is a long history of disputes between the two republics," he said. "But bearing in mind the two sides' good intentions and their willingness to end the killings, we hope the disputes will end as soon as possible."

Mr. Velayati's comments were reported in an Iranian radio broadcast, monitored in London.

The two former southern Soviet republics have been locked in a 4-year-old war for control

over the mountainous region of Nagorno-Karabakh, a predominantly Armenian area controlled by Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijani President Ayaz Mutalibov last week ordered a partial mobilisation of reservists and has stressed his country's intention to form its own army.

Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosian urged the leaders of 14 countries, including the United States, to dissuade Azerbaijan from forming its own army and to help work out a peace plan.

The conflict dates back centuries but flared in 1988 after ethnic Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh began demanding unification with their brethren in Armenia.

More than 1,000 people have died in the fighting, which has defied all settlement efforts.

Armenians reportedly seized one Azerbaijani town and its Azerbaijani residents were being evacuated, according to officials in Moscow and Baku, the Azerbaijani capital.

The fighting raged after Mr. Velayati met in Baku Tuesday with Mr. Mutalibov. Iranian radio said he arranged a 25-hour truce.

An aide to Mr. Mutalibov, Vagif Rustamov, denied any ceasefire was called. But the Armenian mission in Moscow said Armenians in Nagorno-

Karabakh had rejected Mr. Velayati's overture.

Azerbaijan has controlled Nagorno-Karabakh since 1923. The battle for it has evolved into the bloodiest dispute in the former Soviet Union. Both sides have started raiding former Soviet military bases for arms.

Azerbaijani presidential spokesman Rakhim Agayev said more than 500 people have been killed in the fighting in the last four months.

An Armenian National Security official, Aram Avayan, said Wednesday that Azerbaijanis pounded the territory's administrative capital, Stepanakert, with artillery and submachine gun fire overnight and Wednesday.

He said Azerbaijani forces had fired from towns located outside the enclave with Soviet-made Grad rockets, destroying two large buildings and leaving "numerous victims."

Mr. Agayev said Armenian forces seized one town, Khodzha. He said the town was on fire and that Azerbaijani women and children were being evacuated.

Mr. Agayev claimed the Armenians were backed by soldiers, tanks and armoured personnel carriers from a former Soviet army regiment based in Azerbaijan.

The Azerbaijani mission spokesman in Moscow, Fuad

Gadzhiev, said Commonwealth military chief Yevgeny Shaposhnikov allowed the regiment to fire on Azerbaijani towns.

Marshal Shaposhnikov's office could not be reached for comment. Commonwealth military officials have vehemently denied that former Soviet soldiers have taken sides in the dispute and claim that vehicles and weapons have been stolen from the base.

Commonwealth troops in the troubled Transcaucasus have been ordered to return if attacked, ITAR-TASS said Monday.

The Transcaucasus military district command issued the order after Azeri forces fired Sunday on the 366th Motorised Rifle Regiment based in Stepanakert.

Two soldiers died from their wounds. The attacks continued Monday, bringing the number of wounded servicemen to 15, TASS said. Four were in critical state.

The Azeri News Agency Turan said the attacks against the Commonwealth regiment were purely defensive.

TASS said 20 cars belonging to the military in Azerbaijan had been seized over the last three days.

Interfax News Agency said Azeri forces seized a large ammunition store in the town of Agdam, on the border with Karabakh, early Monday.

25 injured by IRA bomb in London

LONDON (AP) — A suspected IRA bomb exploded at a busy London train station during the Friday morning rush hour, injuring 25 commuters, police and hospital officials said.

Ulster Television in Northern Ireland received a coded warning by telephone that a bomb had been planted in a central London rail station 20 minutes before the blast rocked London Bridge Station, police said.

"There was no suitable time to take action," said Commander George Churchill-Coleman, head of Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist unit.

Suspicion immediately fell on the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which in the past has

targeted British train and subway stations in its campaign of violence to end British rule in Northern Ireland.

Prime Minister John Major said the explosion "will not make a scrap of difference to the government's policy on terrorism."

The explosion came a year after an IRA bomb hidden in a garbage can at London's Victoria Station killed one man and injured 38 other people. The IRA blamed the casualties on authorities who did not close all London stations in response to a telephone warning.

Ten days before the Victoria Station attack, a bomb exploded at London's Paddington Station, causing no injuries. It marked the

first IRA attack on London rail stations since the early 70s.

Before Christmas IRA planted firebombs on several London trains, causing billions of dollars of losses in business by closing the capital's transport system.

The explosion at London Bridge occurred in a men's toilet at about 8:30 a.m. (0830 GMT) in the British Rail (IRA) area of the combined train and subway station, said BR spokesman Ian MacGee.

It is the fifth busiest in the capital, handling about 120,000 passengers a day.

"Everyone was coming off one of the trains with blood on them. Blood was everywhere," said Alexandra Hussey, 15.

Serbia declares civil war over; Croats demobilise troops

BELGRADE (AP) — Beset by mounting opposition over the human and economic toll of the conflict with Croatia, President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia has declared the war over.

In another sign of peace, Croatian President Franjo Tudjman ordered the demobilisation of 20,000 reservists, news agencies reported. An aide said the order would take effect immediately and was the first step in a plan to rebuild war-torn Croatia.

The first demobilised soldiers will be civil engineers and construction workers, said the aide, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Many inside Serbia have turned against the once-popular Milosevic and are demanding his resignation. Thursday's declaration appeared to be his response.

"Today we can say that most of the agency in our country is over, and that conditions now exist for the peaceful and democratic solution of the Yugoslav crisis," Mr. Milosevic told Serbia's parliament as a U.N.-mediated truce stretched to nearly two months.

The first of 14,000 peacekeepers are to begin arriving in the next two weeks to enforce the

truce while political negotiations settle the future shape of the patchwork Balkan nation.

In his speech, only the third he has given to parliament, Mr. Milosevic also seemed to move away from previous insistence that serb-dominated regions in other republics be united with Serbia. He said Serbia's union with tiny Montenegro in a smaller Yugoslavia was "the best option."

But his close ally, prominent Serb Borisav Jovic, contradicted Mr. Milosevic by saying the self-proclaimed Serb Republic of Krajina in western Croatia should be part of Yugoslavia.

Croat leaders have vowed to fight giving up any territory.

It remained to be seen whether Serb militants would go along with Mr. Milosevic — Croats reported several violations of the ceasefire Thursday. But most of the insurgents are dependent on Serbia for supplies, and the federal army is dominated by Serbia.

Mr. Milosevic, in fact, acknowledged for the first time that his republic armed the Serb insurgents whose revolt against Croat authority escalated into full-scale war after Croatia declared independence on June 25.

Up to 10,000 people died in six months of fighting before the truce took effect in Croatia on Jan. 3.

Croatia and Slovenia have received international recognition as independent states, and Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia are following that path. There also is growing opposition within Montenegro to a union with Serbia, the Yugoslav Federation's largest republic.

The cost of the war and a European economic embargo has left a fourth of Serbia's work force unemployed and sent prices shooting up 30 per cent a month.

Mr. Milosevic has no direct authority over the federal army, but its commanders have said they support the deployment of U.N. peacekeepers, to be followed by the withdrawal of Yugoslav troops.

He also has power over most Serb insurgents because of their dependence on Serbia for arms. Serbs in eastern Croatia have followed his lead in backing the U.N. peace plan from the start, and the recent ouster of the main Serb leader in western Croatia indicated Mr. Milosevic has at least some control there.

Albanian town in shambles after looting

POGRADE, Albania (AP) — Thousands of looters, some drunk and armed, rampaged through this western Albanian town for a third day Thursday while police seemed helpless or unwilling to stop them.

Mobs also battled police in the central Albanian town of Lushnje, raiding a drug store and two goods depots which were then set on fire, Deputy Minister of Public Order Fadil Canaj told the

Associated Press. Police repelled an attack on the local plastics factory, he said.

Speaking from his office, Mr. Canaj denied there had been more deaths and injuries after two people were killed in Pogradec and one in Lushnje in rioting Wednesday.

People in Pogradec said the two crushed to death there Wednesday were boys aged 13 and 18.

Policeman Pirro Kacorri said 10 state warehouses had been emptied of everything from Western food aid to wicker baskets and industrial chemicals, as entire families carted off all they could carry.

Police were not allowed to fire at the demonstrators, Kacorri said. He added that he could not shoot at people he knows "because tomorrow their families would kill me."

Bush urges tougher anti-drug steps

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (AP) — President Bush and six Latin American leaders concluded a drug summit with renewed pledges to combat narcotics, but no new financial promises from Mr. Bush to help his neighbours fight the battle.

Instead Mr. Bush and the Latin leaders called on European and Asian countries, singling out Japan in particular, to share in both the financial burden of the war on drugs and to join in cooperative interdiction efforts.

The summit nations will send a delegation, with one member from each country, to visit Europe and Japan and seek bilateral and multilateral agreements on aid and cooperation.

In a declaration of San Antonio, the participants agreed to a series of steps that for the most part expand upon existing efforts to combat coca production and money laundering, increase training of law enforcement agents and improve the sharing of intelligence.

They also agreed to hold

annual high-level follow-up meetings to assess progress in the war on drugs.

Mr. Bush called drug trafficking "a new kind of transnational enemy."

"Make no mistake," the president said. "Defeat the traffickers, we will."

"Today's meeting was characterised by total honesty," said President Alberto Fujimori of Peru.

Mr. Fujimori has complained that the United States had not provided enough money to help him reverse his country's status as the world's leading grower of coca leaf, the basis for cocaine.

Peru said his country does not produce coca but it needs more U.S. help "to keep my country from becoming a drug producer."

At a summit-ending news conference, Mr. Bush said there had been significant progress during the past two years, saying drug use among young people in the United States was down by 60 per cent.

Mr. Bush said he and the other leaders had discussed improving efforts to halt shipments of drugs from Latin America to the United States and development of alternative crops to give coca growers an economic basis for moving away from drugs.

"Farmers who once grew coca in Bolivia are exporting pineapples and bananas," said Mr. Bush. "Peru's economy is beginning to grow again. And the Andean states will expand trade with the United States under this new Andean trade preference initiative that I signed into law last December."

But when a reporter from Latin America asked the U.S. president if he was prepared to increase assistance, Mr. Bush replied "the responsibility of the president of the United States is first to the people of the United States."

He said that the United States already has "a fairly generous allocation of funds to these countries."

U.S. commended for concessions on global warming, but accord still elusive

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — New steps promised by the United States have raised hopes for a treaty to forestall global warming even though they fall short of European demands for specific limits on carbon dioxide limits.

"It's an encouraging sign of progress, but there's a long way to go," Brooks Yeager of the National Audubon Society said after the steps were announced.

"It shows a new desire on the part of the White House to play a constructive role in the negotiations," Mr. Yeager said.

But the talks, which resumed Feb. 18 at the United Nations, were expected to conclude Friday without resolving a European demand that industrial nations stabilise their emissions at 1990 levels by the year 2000.

The negotiators aim to reach an accord to be signed in June at the U.N. conference on environment and development in Rio de Janeiro.

The United States said Thursday that it will reduce its carbon

dioxide emissions and donate \$75 million to help developing countries do the same, raising hopes for an agreement.

The United States has refused to agree to specific limits on carbon dioxide emissions, arguing that this could impose unreasonable costs on industry.

But the new U.S. measures could result in reducing emissions to that level, environmental groups noted.

Carbon dioxide formed by the burning of fossil fuels is a prime contributor to the so-called greenhouse effect, the build-up of gases that can trap the sun's heat and raise the earth's temperature.

The United States said Thursday it would donate \$50 million to the World Bank's global environment facility, which funds efforts by developing countries to address the problem of climate change. An additional \$25 million is to be spent on cooperative studies to help developing countries assess their emissions and devise ways to reduce them.

Among the measures announced by the United States to curb its own emissions of greenhouse gases were:

— Improving energy efficiency by raising standards for buildings and appliances and by encouraging public-private partnerships to improve the efficiency of lighting, computer systems, refrigerators and industrial motors.

— Introducing measures encouraging the use of public transit and of vehicles run on alternative fuels.

— Encouraging research on more efficient aircraft and trains, new methods of energy generation and promoting industrial waste reduction and recycling.

It is widely predicted that carbon dioxide levels in the Earth's atmosphere could double in the next century unless steps are taken to sharply reduce emissions.

This would raise the Earth's temperature by 2.7 to 8 degrees, causing unpredictable climate disruptions and raising ocean levels enough to threaten coastal areas.

Republican, Democratic races get nastier

BILL Clinton, Bob Kerrey and Paul Tsongas attacked each other's candidacy in a Democratic presidential race growing testier by the day. The Bush campaign complained that Patrick Buchanan's television commercials were "disgusting lies."

The race grew nastier as the stakes grew higher. The 783 delegates at stake in next Tuesday's Democratic primaries and caucuses. The candidate from each party receiving the most delegate votes is usually tabbed to run for president.

After weeks of an unusually well-mannered campaign that did little to establish a front-runner, Sen. Kerrey derided Mr. Clinton's reasons for not serving in Vietnam as "baloney." Mr. Clinton said Mr. Tsongas' opposition to a middle class tax cut was "cold-blooded."

And Mr. Tsongas went after both his rivals, noting they raised the gas taxes in their states but now were criticising his call for a similar increase.

Mr. Clinton, looking for his first win of the primary season, also mended fences with civil rights leader Jesse Jackson after bitterly accusing him of "backstabbing" when he was told erroneously that Rev. Jackson had decided to back a Democratic rival. Mr. Clinton's comments were picked up by an open microphone and recorded without his knowledge.

The verbal fisticuffs — supplemented by increasingly sharp television ads — came as the five major Democrats girded for next week's primaries in Maryland, Georgia, Colorado and Utah, and caucuses in three other states.

Mr. Buchanan, looking to upset Mr. George Bush in next week's Georgia primary, began airing commercials critical of an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) ruling that he says would track donations to churches. The IRS is the government's tax collection

agency. Another commercial accuses the National Endowment for the Arts of funding "pornographic and blasphemous art too shocking to show," and said "Bush continued to fund" it after people objected.

Mr. Bush campaign spokeswoman Torie Clark termed the commercials "disgusting lies ... President Bush never has and never will interfere with religious freedom and the pornography one is garbage as well."

Sen. Kerry poked at Mr. Clinton's non-service in Vietnam for a second straight day and said the Arkansas governor couldn't win an election against the Republicans.

"Had he wanted to go and serve his country, he could have," said Sen. Kerrey, who lost part of his leg in Vietnam. He made his comments in Florida, site of a March 10 primary, but his remarks were also aimed at next door Georgia — where Mr. Clinton leads in the polls — and the rest of the southern states voting over the next two weeks.

Mr. Clinton received a draft

deferment while in college and agreed to join an officer's programme. But he later changed his mind about ROTC and received a high lottery number that was never called for the draft.

Mr. Clinton targeted Mr. Tsongas as he sought support for next week's primary in Colorado, where polls show him narrowly trailing his rival. He called the former Massachusetts senator "a candidate of Wall Street" for his pro-business economic policies, noting that Mr. Tsongas earned \$200,000 in corporate board fees last year and is a registered lobbyist in Washington.

Campaigning in energy-conscious Colorado, Mr. Tsongas said the gasoline tax has doubled in Arkansas during Mr. Clinton's tenure, and noted the tax rose in Nebraska while Sen. Kerrey was governor there.

Mr. Tsongas has been hit by his rivals in recent weeks for advocating a phased-in 50 cent-per-gallon gas tax increase.

Sen. Tom Harkin, low on funds, campaigned in Maryland and former California Gov. Jerry Brown was in Washington, another caucus state.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Soldiers seize Niger radio station

NIAMEY, Niger (AP) — Soldiers demanding back pay took over the state radio headquarters Friday and claimed to have arrested the president of the interim ruling council and the interior minister. Gunshots were heard near a barracks outside Niamey, the capital of this impoverished West African nation, but there were no reports of casualties. A communiqué announcing the arrests and demanding the ouster of the army chief of staff, Abou Mamane, was broadcast repeatedly on the radio and was interspersed with military music. The state-run Niger News Agency said an army garrison at Agades, 800 kilometres northeast of Niamey, was supporting the mutineers. The agency gave no details. It was not clear how many soldiers were in the radio station and the extent of their support. The rebellious soldiers announced the arrest of Professor Andre Salifou, president of Niger's High Council, an interim legislative body installed by a national conference last November. The communiqué also claimed the arrest of interior Minister Mohammad Moussa.

High-level U.S. team to visit Hanoi

WASHINGTON (AP) — A delegation led by Assistant Secretary of State Richard Solomon will visit Vietnam on March 3-5 to discuss missing American servicemen and humanitarian aid, the department spokesman has announced. Richard Boucher said the Vietnam trip will follow discussions held at a lower level since 1987 and a visit to Hanoi in late January by General John Vessey, the president's special emissary to Hanoi on matters concerning Americans who were war prisoners and those missing in action. "The decision to have Mr. Solomon head the delegation this year is an indication of the increased importance with which we view this initiative," he said. In August, 1987 the United States and Vietnam agreed that Vietnam would cooperate in tracing missing American prisoners and servicemen and the United States would encourage American non-governmental organisations to give humanitarian aid to Vietnam.

Panel urges end to Japan-bashing

WASHINGTON (AP) — Politicians who denounce Japan are fueling bigotry against Asian-Americans, who already face widespread discrimination and even violence, the U.S. Civil Rights Commission said Friday. It urged leaders to refrain from "Japan-bashing" and other remarks that promote or play upon racial and ethnic bias. "Political leaders contribute to the problem when they unwittingly lash out at Japan as the cause of United States economic difficulties," the commission said. "More important, political and government leaders have yet to make it a national priority to prevent and denounce anti-Asian prejudice and violence." The panel released a 233-page report describing discrimination against the nation's 7.3 million Asian-Americans and saying violence against them "remains a serious national problem." It offered 44 recommendations, including greater federal effort to prevent hate crimes, better efforts by police agencies to hire Asian-Americans and increased sensitivity by the news media.

Rao elected Congress president

NEW DELHI (AP) — Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao was elected president of the monolithic Congress Party, succeeding slain President Rajiv Gandhi, a senior party leader said Friday. Congress official Sitaram Kesri said that for Thursday's election, 57 nominations were filed, all for Mr. Rao. Mr. Rao, who served in the cabinets of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her son and successor Rajiv, became the acting president of the Congress Party following the assassination of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi on May 21 while national elections were underway. Congress won the elections and Mr. Rao was chosen prime minister.

Former senator, S.I. Hayakawa, dies

GREENBRAE, California (AP) — S.I. Hayakawa, the soft-spoken semantics professor whose dramatic 1968 confrontation with student protesters launched a political career that took him to the U.S. Senate has died, a hospital spokeswoman said. He was 85. Prof. Hayakawa, who was hospitalised with bronchitis, died of a stroke about 1. a.m., said Nancy Nickel, spokeswoman for Marian General Hospital. He had been hospitalised since Tuesday. Hayakawa, who lived in nearby Mill Valley, was an internationally known semanticist for nearly three decades.

U.S. welcomes East Timor charges

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. government and human rights groups have welcomed Indonesian action against military officers for a massacre in East Timor. But the rights advocates said Indonesian repression continues. The U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman, Claiborne Pell, said he would urge U.S. officials to monitor trials of the soldiers as well as 13 civilians charged with subversion in the Nov. 12 incident. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said the U.S. government was "encouraged by the Indonesian government's serious efforts to make amends for what it acknowledges was an excessive use of force by military units." A government commission said 50 people died in the massacre, with 90 others missing or in hiding. Human rights group said the death toll was about 200. Representatives of Amnesty International and Asia Watch told Sen. Pell's committee that it is the first time Indonesia, in what they said is a long history of human rights abuses, has ever responded by disciplining or trying military officers.

U.S. sub damaged in collision

WASHINGTON (AP) — Contrary to earlier reports, the U.S. nuclear attack submarine that collided with a Russian sub in the Arctic Ocean was damaged, the Pentagon has acknowledged. Two gas bubbles were found on the vessel's port side ballast tanks, according to Defence Department spokesman Pete Williams. Mr. Williams said the navy found the damage after sending underwater divers to inspect the vessel, the USS Baton Rouge. The submarine returned to its home port of Norfolk, Virginia, Tuesday, where officials repeated assertions it had not been damaged in its Feb. 11 collision with a Russian vessel.



Police chief welcomes gay cops

SAN JOSE, California (AP) — The city's new police chief says he'll recruit homosexuals, making him the nation's first top cop outside of San Francisco to personally seek gays for law enforcement jobs. Chief Lou Cobarruviaz, who helped start a minority recruitment programme after he joined the force in the 1960s, said Thursday he'll make his pitch at a local gay pride celebration in June. "I've always wanted to bring diversity to the department to truly reflect the diversity of the community," said Chief Cobarruviaz, who won the chief's job in October. Chief Cobarruviaz said recruiting qualified homosexual officers might prompt more reporting of hate crimes against gays, who are often too afraid to approach police. In San Francisco, Sheriff Mike Hennessey has personally invited homosexuals to join his agency. The San Francisco Police Department has recruited homosexuals since the 1970s.

Irish magnate bagged in cocaine episode, police say

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — One of Ireland's richest men was arrested on drug charges last week after threatening suicide during a cocaine overdose with an escort girl at a hotel near Disney World, police said. Ben Dunne, 42-year-old supermarket executive from Dublin, was charged with cocaine trafficking, said Jim Solomons of the Orange County Sheriff's Office. Sheriff's deputies said he was threatening to jump over a railing from the 17th floor of the Hyatt-Regency Grand Cypress Hotel near Disney World when they arrived at the scene. "He was threatening to jump and take anyone with him that got near him," said Mr. Solomons. An arrest report said he was shouting, "Help me help me get the police." It took more than an hour for deputies to talk the shirtless, shoeless man out of jumping. Then searched his hotel room, where they found 32.5 grams of cocaine in a plastic bag in his suitcase, deputies said. A 22-year-old woman who identified herself as an "escort girl" told sheriff's deputies that she had watched Dunne ingest "a large quantity of cocaine." Dunne had then gone "berserk" and told hotel employees he was going to jump into the interior atrium of the hotel, Mr. Solomons said.

Harold Robbins marries for 6th time

PALM SPRINGS, California (AP) — Novelist Harold Robbins, perhaps hoping the sixth time will be the charm, married a businesswoman slightly more than half his age in a Valentine's Day ceremony. Robbins, 75, married Oklahoma businesswoman Jann Stapp, 40, on Feb. 14 in the author's home, it was announced. The wedding was the sixth for Robbins.

Cost of laziness soars in China

PEKING (R) — Slack officials cost China a record 830 million yuan (\$153.7 million in direct economic losses in 1991, with many civil servants too lazy to check state purchasing and credit agreements, the official China Daily said Monday. It said the Supreme Procuratorate investigated 3,189 cases of dereliction of duty in 1991, an increase of five per cent over the previous year. "Many were found to have provided credit by violating financial regulations or accepting too readily claims by some manufacturers who were then found to be unable to pay back the money," the newspaper said. Saying dereliction of duty "cannot simply be treated as an error of judgment," the procuratorate is working out a series of penalties for lazy officials who end up costing the state money, the newspaper said.

Hula hoops rage in China

PEKING (R) — Hula hoops, which swept the United States during the 1950s, are the rage in the Chinese capital this season. The official New China News Agency, in a rare trend piece, gave its approval of the bourgeois Western fad Monday. "It is part of the new trend of keeping fit and slim," it said. The multi-coloured hoops are on sale in virtually all the city's markets and department stores for about seven yuan (\$1.20). Hula hoops are a sign of prosperity, the agency said. "With the development of the national economy and improvement of people's living standards, people are shifting their attention to health rather than appearance."

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